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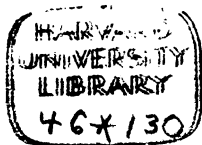
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TALES FROM THE ENGLISH ANNUALS

FOR 1835.

THE BEAR OF CARNIOLA.

BY T. K. HERVEY, ESQ.

[From "*The Forget Me Not*," for 1835.]

The incidents of the following tale, romantic as they may appear, are attested by the chroniclers of the country, and verified by the existing monuments of the times in which they are laid.

ONE evening, in winter, the Emperor Maximilian was seated at table, surrounded by the principal lords of his court. The night was far advanced, and many a brimming goblet had given birth to many a lively sally. One by one had been toasted the noted beauties of the day, each toast being seasoned with the scandal of the times, and each anecdote heightening the hilarity of the guests. The Empress herself, it was said, had not been spared, so much boldness had the generous wine of Hungary given to the drinkers, and tolerance to the monarch. Carelessly reclining in his chair, lined with embroidered skins, one hand of the prince played with the fair ringlets of a page, who stood by his side, whilst he listened with a smile to the story of a beautiful Baroness of Ebersdorff. A sudden noise arose at the door of the chamber. The two men-at-arms who guarded the entrance reeled, as if flung aside by a powerful effort; and a knight of lofty stature, wearing over his hauberk a huge bear-skin, strode boldly up the hall, and paused within three steps of the Emperor.

"Who is this insolent intruder," cried the enraged monarch, "who dares thus to penetrate into my presence, and beat down my guards?—Does he know before whom he stands?"

"He does," replied the stranger, bluntly. "You are the Emperor; and if it be *my* duty to obey your commands as supreme head of the empire, and to serve you in your wars, it is *yours* to do me justice when I need it. And can I find for my demand a time more fitting than when you are embarrassed by no business, by no cares, and engaged in no more pressing occupation than that of drinking and taking your pleasure?"

Maximilian darted around the assembly glances flashing with astonishment and anger. "Will none of you," he cried, "tell me who is this strange petitioner; who appears here as if he had fallen from the sky, and speaks as haughtily—God pardon me!—as if he were an elector of the Holy Empire?"

An aged knight, who, in spite of copious libations, still retained some presence of mind, at length broke silence. "Sire," said he, "if the somewhat savage dress which distinguishes this bold knight did not of itself identify him, his bearing and his language would proclaim him to be the noble Hermann, Lord of Lueg, commonly called The Bear of Carniola."

"I begin to understand," said the Emperor; "the Bear has quitted his forests, allured by the scent of our imperial kitchen. Lord of Lueg, your little castle is far from Vienna; what pressing motive has driven you to this journey? — Is it hunger or cold? — Or have a few robbers taken your domain by assault, and have you come to apply for some dozen of our men to aid you in reconquering your heritage?"

"In my castle," replied the indignant Herrmann, "we suffer neither from hunger nor from cold. If it should please your majesty to honour it with a visit, I take upon myself to feast you and your retinue with fresh meats, green vegetables, and juicy fruits, in that rigorous season when, as I here perceive, your majesty's table is covered only with confectionary and dried fruits. As for an attack on my castle by a few robbers, so far from needing your majesty's aid in such a peril, I should not be afraid to undertake its defence against your majesty's self, in case you should take it into your head to besiege it with your entire army."

A long and unanimous burst of laughter replied to this declaration of the knight's. Maximilian himself, in spite of his efforts, was compelled to join in the general merriment. Herrmann's eyes flashed fire upon the assembly; and when they fell upon the emperor it was evident that respect for his authority alone restrained the utterance of his indignation. The monarch at length perceived that the dignity of his rank was suffering from this scene, and he assumed a tone more befitting himself, as he again addressed the knight.

"High and puissant Lord of Lueg," he said, "who possess such mighty riches, and a fortress of such strength, what can you have to ask at hands weak as ours?"

"I have said it, sire — Justice! — justice on one of your vassals, who has deeply wronged me!"

The Emperor frowned. "Justice," he murmured; "that eternal word, justice, is ever in all their mouths. One would think, to hear them, that a sovereign once seated on the throne of the Cæsars had no future occupation save that of listening to complaints. Herrmann! could not you, after the practice of so many of your class, do yourself justice? — and, if not, think you that you have chosen a place and an hour the most fitting to put the wisdom of our judgment to the proof?"

"The rank of the offender," gravely replied the knight, "did not permit me to take justice into my own hands, until I had first tried the effect of an appeal to your sovereign decision. As for the time and place which I have chosen, they seem to me fitting, since your majesty can at once hear the parties, and form your opinion, my adversary being now in your presence."

"Here!" cried the Emperor; "your foe here! — who, then, is he?"

"Behold him!" cried Herrmann, pointing to the noble who sat on the monarch's right hand; "I demand justice against the grand marshal, the Count Pappenheim!"

"Pappenheim," exclaimed the emperor, "thou hearest! What dealings can there be between the Bear of Carniola and thee? — How hast thou wronged him?"

The grand marshal according to his custom, was the least sober of the company. He had arrived at that middle state, between sleeping and waking, in which it is alike fatiguing to hear, to speak, or to think. At his master's question, however, he raised his eyes heavily, gazed stupidly on Herrmann for a moment, then let them fall again, and replied, in a voice broken by hiccough, "I never saw the man in my life — I have no dealings with him."

"More than you think, Count Pappenheim," said Herrmann. "It may be that you know me not; but you have not forgotten the young girl whom

you carried off last summer from the monastery of Inspruck, and foully abandoned at Salzburg."

"A young girl carried off! Is this true Pappenheim?" said the Emperor mildly to his favourite. "By my faith another of thy wild tricks this! Wilt thou be for ever incorrigible?"

The grand marshal made a prodigious effort at attention, and sought from amid the chaos which the wine had produced in his brain to muster a few recollections. At length he appeared to have succeeded, for he made an attempt at a smile, and murmured, in an under-voice, "At Salzburg! Oh, *Ida!* the charming girl! — Ay, by my faith, she *was* handsome!"

"That *Ida*," cried Herrmann, in a voice which sounded as if it issued from a tomb — "that *Ida* whom her beauty has plunged into the ruin which you prepared for her — that *Ida* was my own blood — my only child — the last scion of the house of Lueg!"

At these words, a deep silence fell upon the assembly, and its gaiety went out, as by a sudden chill. The face of the Emperor became grave, and his voice was solemn and kind when he again spoke to Herrmann.

"Knight of Lueg," he said, "the charge which you prefer against our grand marshal is a heavy one. This matter shall be investigated with scrupulous care; but, at this moment, Pappenheim is, as you see, in no condition to reply. Return to-morrow, and we will take counsel on the means of healing this grievous wound."

"And how, then, does your majesty imagine that a quarrel like this can be reconciled?" vehemently asked the knight of Carniola.

"Only by proportioning the reparation to the greatness of the outrage, and to the rank and fortune of the offender," replied the Emperor.

"One only reparation is possible!" vociferated Herrmann, in a voice hoarse from the concentration of many feelings. "And, oh! that I should be driven to receive *that* from a man degraded by debauch, like him whom I now see before me! But honour sways all other feelings. Your majesty has heard from that drunkard's mouth the avowal of his crime and the proof of my wrong. There needs no counsel, and can be no delay. Here, on this spot, and at this moment, your majesty will order the Count Pappenheim to espouse my daughter, whom he has seduced and dishonoured."

There was a moments' silence, during which the guests whispered with each other. The grand marshal gazed by turns on the Emperor and the knight, and seemed suddenly to comprehend what was passing: for, bursting into a drunken laugh, he exclaimed, "I! — I marry *Ida!* — Ha! ha!"

The Emperor darted on him an indignant look, and for an instant seemed uncertain how to act. At length he turned towards the knight, with that air of princely dignity which he could assume upon occasion, and thus addressed him: "Lord of Lueg — were it even fully demonstrated that your complaint is well-founded — that all the blame is on the side of the grand marshal alone — that your daughter is, in truth, the victim of seduction, carried on by artifice and crowned by perfidy — and were I — overlooking all the difficulties which stand in the way of this unequal union — to employ all my authority in compelling him to contract it — he could not obey me. Pappenheim is married."

As he spoke, a sudden and deadly paleness overspread the face of Herrmann of Lueg, and his teeth chattered as with mortal cold. A violent spasm shook his whole frame; and a sort of growl struggled from his throat, which made the assembly shudder. Even the intoxication of Pappenheim seemed to vanish before the savage aspect of his furious accuser. He half rose from his seat, and gazed on his foe with a livid lip and a quailing eye. At a sign from the Emperor, two of the guards had placed themselves by the side of Herrmann, who struggled fearfully with the feelings that for many seconds were his uncontrolled masters. At length, and after ter

rible efforts, he succeeded in regaining articulation; and his voice broken, and interrupted at first by the strong contest of the passions, grew clear as he proceeded, and, before he ceased, was loud, and wild, and shrill, as when he shouted his war-cry in the rush and whirlwind of the fight.

"Married! — monster! — my poor, poor, Ida! — lost! — for ever lost! — no more then of reparation! — no more appeals to justice! — but blood! — vengeance! — vile seducer! To the sanctuary of this palace thou owest it that this moment is not the last of thy life! But I defy thee! — Count of Pappenheim, I defy thee to mortal combat, afoot or on horse, with lance, sword, and dagger! Take my battle-gage — and be it a presage of thine overthrow!"

While thus speaking, Herrmann had loosed from his arm a heavy gauntlet of iron, and, as he finished, he hurled it with prodigious force in the face of the grand marshal. The blow was so violent that Pappenheim, overthrown, fell on the breast of the Emperor, bathing the royal garments with his blood. His left temple was beaten in by the stroke of the terrible gauntlet. A momentary spasm convulsed him — his limbs stiffened — and there remained in the arms of Maximilian only the corpse of his favourite.

The spectators rushed forward with cries of horror and affright, and the next movement was to seize the murderer. But he was gone. One of the guards was rising slowly from the floor, on which he had been flung; and the other yet staggered under a blow which Herrmann had dealt him as he retreated. Some of the party hurried into the hall, in the hope of overtaking the knight before he could pass the guards stationed at the palace gates; but it was soon discovered that he had entered these apartments by a door communicating with the exterior of the palace, which, being usually kept closed, was left unguarded, and that he had thus effected his unobstructed escape.

On the following morning, the trumpets of the heralds sounded in the streets of Vienna; and they proclaimed a reward of four hundred golden ducats to any one who should bring in, dead or alive, the knight Herrmann of Lueg, murderer of the grand marshal. Orders were also despatched to the governors and councils of the different towns of the empire, to seize him wherever he might be found. The funeral of the Count Pappenheim was celebrated with great pomp, and the mausoleum raised to his memory may still be seen in the cathedral of St. Stephen.

A month passed away without tidings of the knight of Carniola. At the end of that time, the following report from the commander of the district of Laybach was transmitted to the imperial chancery: —

According to intelligence which I have obtained, it appears that the knight Herrmann of Lueg passed through this town about three weeks ago. In his company was a young girl, who travelled on a pillion behind him. They were met by two inhabitants of Idria, in the morning, a few miles from this place, on the mountain. The horse, worn out with fatigue, had broken down; and Herrmann was in the act of abandoning it, carrying in one hand his cloak-bag, and with the other supporting the young girl, who appeared to be very weak and ill, and whom the peasants believe to have been his daughter. They lost sight of the travellers amid the winding paths which lead to the castle of Lueg.

On the receipt of this information, I sent a sergeant and ten men-at-arms to seize the murderer in his den. The sergeant had not returned, and one only of his ten companions has this morning come back, bringing the following extraordinary particulars: —

Though the castle of Lueg is but a day's journey from this place, the men were unable to reach their destination before the second evening. The difficulty of advancing at this season of the year, by paths buried in snow, cut through gloomy forests, and along abrupt precipices, was partly the

cause of this delay ; but it was greatly increased by the absolute necessity of seeking guides and the great difficulty of procuring them. The peasants of the neighbourhood, apprised of the purpose of the expedition, fled at the approach of the soldiers ; and the women only remained behind, who assured them that the castle was impregnable, and defended by unearthly powers. In the end, however, a young peasant was forcibly placed at the head of the detachment, and compelled to show the way to the fortress. Arrived at the foot of the rock on which the castle stands, the soldiers began to climb the narrow and dangerous road which conducts to its principal entrance ; but, before they had proceeded far, they were stopped by a wall of snow, of fearful height, and extending directly across their path. Whilst they were seeking some means of passing this barrier, their attention was attracted by a sound overhead ; and, looking up, they saw (says the soldier) a troop of bears, furiously pawing amid the snow, and growling defiance, as it were, against the assailants. While their attention was riveted upon this strange sight, the terrified guide fled, and the surviving soldier was directed by his sergeant to pursue. This order saved his life ; for, at the moment he overtook the peasant, the wall of snow was shaken behind him, and an avalanche, huge as a mountain, overwhelmed his miserable companions. He affirms that at this moment he heard the hideous roar of the bears rise up like a shout of victory, and that he saw the animals fly like shadows toward the pinnacle of the rock. The dreadful and momentary scene was succeeded by an awful silence ; and the two sole survivors returned to make their report of it to me. Every where on their route this singular catastrophe only served to confirm the terrified peasants in their previous belief—that the castle of Lueg is protected by supernatural agents.

Upon receipt of this report, the Aulic Council of War despatched immediate orders to the military governor of Carniola, to invest the castle of Lueg, to destroy it by fire and sword, and to seize all, without exception, who should be found within its walls. But, before this order reached him, circumstances still more extraordinary than those which we have narrated had occurred to strengthen the belief of the neighbourhood in the magic resources of the castle.

On the morning which succeeded the mission of the former expedition, the inhabitants of Wipach, a village in Upper Italy, situate to the left of the road leading from Udine to Laybach, and more than twelve miles from Lueg, discovered on the entrance-steps of their church, in the public square, ten sleeping men. They were recognised by their dress as soldiers of the imperial guard ; but, on awaking them, it was found impossible to learn from them the motive of their entering the states of Venice, then in profound peace with the Emperor. As they appeared to be suffering and exhausted, the local magistrate ordered refreshments to be distributed to them, and furnished them on the following day with a conveyance to Adelsberg, the nearest imperial town, where they were taken before the commandant of the castle. To his unbounded astonishment, they turned out to be the sergeant and the nine soldiers who were believed to have been lying for two days beneath the snow in the gloomy valley of Lueg.

No rational or satisfactory account of their strange adventure could, however, be extracted from the men. They were separately examined, and unanimous in declaring that they were ignorant of the means by which they had been brought to Italy ; having no consciousness of any thing which had happened to them since they were stricken insensible by the falling snow. They appeared to be quite as much astonished at the event and at their present situation as their interrogators. One of them related, as the confused and wandering recollection of a painful dream, that he had been in hell ; where he had beheld demons dancing round a huge fire, and been forced to swallow burning liquids ; and all were firmly persuaded that they

had been under the influence of evil spirits, who had ultimately carried them through the air, and laid them down in the square of Wipach.

The governor, however, despising the popular rumours, set about executing his orders, and, in person, led a body of troops to the siege of Lueg. He took with him two very light pieces of artillery, of a kind then recently come into use, called falconets; and made all possible arrangements for supplying his camp with provisions as amply as the severity of the season and the sterility of the country would permit.

The castle of Lueg is built in an immense hollow, formed by nature in the face of a perpendicular rock, at about two thirds of its height, the sides of which shelter it in every direction, except towards the east. From the almost inaccessible summit of the mountain which overhangs it a stone would fall to the bottom of the hollow, passing in front of the castle, but without striking it. It cannot be seen from the foot of the rock, or from the valley which it commands, and is visible only from the surrounding heights, which are at too great a distance for artillery planted on them to bear upon the fortress. At the time of which we speak, a narrow path, cut in the face of the rock, and winding in many zigzags, was the only one which afforded access to the castle; and it was at the entrance to this path that the soldiers first sent against Herrmann had been overwhelmed by the falling snow.

Having reconnoitered the fortress, and decided that it was inaccessible by any other way than the winding path in front, the governor signified his approach to the besieged by a discharge of arquebuses and artillery. The balls broke off some splinters from the rock; but not one of them reached the castle, which, at this point, as we have said, was invisible to the engineers. Guards were placed on all the adjacent heights; the neighbouring forests were in vain explored in all directions, to ascertain if no other road than that which we have described could be discovered; and, as this only path was completely choked up with ice and snow, and a single man could, under such circumstances, have readily stopped the advance of an entire army along its narrow and sinuous defiles, the governor deemed it advisable to convert the siege into a blockade, and endeavour, by the aid of famine, to conquer those whom nature had taken pains to defend by so extraordinary a position.

It was drawing towards the close of December; the cold was piercing, and the tents of the besiegers afforded very inadequate shelter. Their provisions, brought from a considerable distance, were mostly frozen on the way. At the same time, the thick smoke which rose from the castle overhead indicated that its occupants possessed all the requisites for defending themselves against the severity of the season. To the shouts of menace which were directed against them they had only replied by mocking cries. Each evening, the echoes of a falconet, discharged by the besiegers to awaken the attention of their outposts, resounded through the valley; and it was invariably replied to by a similar discharge from the castle; after which the soldiers occasionally fancied they could hear the sentinels relieved on the Alpine platform overhead.

Things continued in this state till towards the beginning of March, and the governor felt assured that the besieged could not possibly hold out much longer; for he had learned that the castle was but slenderly provisioned at the moment of its investment, and that Herrmann had not had time or opportunity for collecting stores. His conjectures appeared about to be realised, when, after a siege of more than sixty days, he beheld, one morning, a white flag planted at the summit of the path which led to the castle, and two or three unarmed men waving handkerchiefs over the parapet of the platform. Convinced that the besieged were making signals of surrender, he sent two officers to meet their flag of truce and conduct the bearers

into the camp. At the same time, he perceived advancing down the tortuous path a superintendent and four men, bearing large baskets on their shoulders, which they finally deposited at the foot of the rock. Their leader at the same time delivered a dispatch for the governor, and then with the rest of the envoys immediately began to reascend the precipice.

The baskets and the dispatch were carried to the camp. The latter contained a letter from Herrmann to the governor, counselling him to abandon his useless enterprise, and save himself and his soldiers from perishing with cold, in the attempt to blockade a fortress defended by a power mightier than that of the sovereign who had sent him. It consoled with him on the numberless privations to which he had been subjected in the discharge of his difficult duty; and knowing, said the letter, how much the governor must suffer from the scarcity of provisions in this rude season, the writer requested his cordial acceptance of the little present therewith sent—which present he undertook to renew, during the continuance of the inclement weather, as often as the governor would do him the honour to accept it.

After the reading of this singular epistle, the baskets were opened. The first was filled with Cyprus wines, Italian liqueurs, and choice confections; the second, with fish of various kinds, which appeared to have left its native element but a few hours; the third, with oranges and lemons of great beauty and excellent quality; and the fourth enclosed green herbs, salads fresh gathered, and strawberries and raspberries in full ripeness.

The surprise which this extraordinary gift excited in the camp soon resolved itself into a participation, by no means equivocal, of the popular terrors on the part of the soldiers, who could not help attributing to sorcery that which it was impossible to account for by natural means. A few days afterwards, the governor, having determined to accept the challenge of Herrmann, for the purpose of ascertaining how far it might be mere bravado, requested a supply of fresh provisions for the festival of Mid-Lent, which, he reminded the knight, was a *flesh-day*; and to this demand Herrmann replied by sending him the four quarters of an ox and a dozen roasted lambs. The murmurs of the soldiers rose louder with their increased conviction of the magic defences opposed to them; and there was great reason to apprehend that the panic which had spread among them would render the further prosecution of the enterprise useless. The governor, however, had come to a different conclusion; and, on the same day, he wrote to his court the assurance of a speedy and successful termination to the siege, in consequence, he said, of circumstances which had just been communicated to him.

The severe season was drawing towards its close. The snow yet covered the whole of the Julian Alps, amid which the castle of Lueg is situated; its streams and lakes were still frozen. But, at the southern foot of this chain, the soil of Italy had begun to put on its garb of greenness. The wood-cutters of Carniola were still shut up closely in their smoky cabins, while the dwellers on the banks of the Isonce, at only a few leagues' distance, had already spread themselves abroad over the fields, and, cheered by the earliest beams of a March sun, resumed their rustic occupations.

In the little town of Gorice, the capital of that happy country, had, for many years, resided an honest disciple of Esculapius, who, in the quiet and benevolent exercise of his useful art, had conciliated the respect and affections of the simple people amongst whom he dwelt. And truly did the Doctor Belgarbo deserve the reputation which he enjoyed, and which had somehow spread beyond the neighbourhood which might have seemed to be the natural limit of its influence. An exterior somewhat rude, and manners which had taken their tone and forms from the mountains, were combined with an upright spirit and a gentle heart. To his skill as a physi-

clan he added the fidelity and the judgment which made him a sure and fast friend, and, in cases of difficulty, a safe and prudent counsellor.

It was towards the close of Lent, in the year which witnessed the events just narrated, that a servant in livery, and leading by the bridle a riderless horse, richly caparisoned, stopped one morning at the doctor's gate. He was the bearer of a letter, written in the most pressing terms, which intreated Belgarbo to set out without delay for a castle in the neighbourhood of Idria, in order to employ the resources of his skill in behalf of a lady of rank, who was severely indisposed. Not unaccustomed to such summonses, the doctor at once took his cloak and case of instruments; and, having delivered a few instructions to the assistant, who supplied his place during his short absences, he mounted the horse brought for him, and set out with his guide in the direction of Germany.

After a few hours' riding, they passed through the village of Wipach, and about sunset arrived at the extremity of the valley leading to the foot of the mountains, over which lies the road into Carniola.

During their ride, the doctor had time to remember that the letter mentioned neither the name of the sick lady, nor that of the place to which he was thus suddenly summoned; and he had more than once endeavoured to extract some information on these subjects from his guide. But the man either could not or would not give him any further explanation than the assurance that they should reach the place of their destination on that same evening.

At length, at the entrance of a very confined gorge, and on the brink of a stream whose noisy waters were crossed by a rude bridge, his guide turned aside, and struck into a narrow and difficult defile to the right, following the edge of the torrent in a direction contrary to its course, and penetrating among steep and abrupt rocks whose bases formed its rough bed. The doctor could not help feeling some surprise that such a path should lead to any habitation; in fact, after a few minutes of travel, the by-road itself disappeared at the foot of a perpendicular cliff, whose lofty and abrupt front was separated by a kind of esplanade, only a few fathoms in breadth, from a precipice, at whose dark foot the torrent flowed with a dismal sound. Here his guide paused and dismounted, directing the doctor to do the same. "The rest of our journey," said he, "can be performed only on foot."

The doctor threw a distrustful and uneasy glance around him. The sun had sunk below the visible horizon; but, by the imperfect light which still lingered in the heavens, he perceived, at a few paces' distance, the entrance of a low cavern. While his eye was fixed upon it, two men issued from its mouth, and began silently busying themselves about the horses, the bridles of which they tied to the hanging shrubs which clung to the face of the rock. Their spatterdashes of leather, and caps made of the skin of the wild-boar, gave them the appearance of miners; but they wore, besides, over their shoulders, each a bear-skin cloak, reaching down to the waist.

By the time, however, that he had completed his hurried survey, his guide had struck a light; and, the men who had issued from the cavern having kindled two torches, he turned to Belgarbo, and, with a motion of the finger, directed him to enter the subterranean passage. The doctor was a man of resolution; and, without giving way to unnecessary alarm at the somewhat extraordinary position in which he found himself, he resolved to break its mystery. Turning to his conductor, he addressed him in a firm tone and manner.

"I came here to visit a sick lady in a knightly castle," he said, "and not to explore gloomy caverns with unknown companions. Unless the object for which I have been brought hither, the place to which it is proposed to conduct me, and the name of the parties having need of my services, be explained to me in clear terms, I refuse to proceed further, and

will at once endeavour to retrace the road by which I have been led into this wild place."

"You are wrong," said his guide, in a mild tone, "to distrust us. No danger awaits you. The master whom I serve has, in truth, placed himself in your power, since I have conducted you, without taking any precautions for secrecy, into a place, which it is of high importance to him that no stranger should know. My orders are to lead you into his presence; but I am forbidden to employ any means of compulsion. If you persist in your refusal to follow us, it will be my duty to conduct you back to Gorice, without further condition on your part than your word of honour never to point out to living man the spot on which we now stand. But, trust me, should you complete the journey, you will find no cause to repent it. My master is generous, and will freely requite the services he seeks at your hands—to say nothing of the urgency with which humanity calls on you to exert the power of your art for a beautiful and unhappy lady, whose real danger alarms all who love, and grieves all who serve her."

During this harangue, the doctor fixed his eyes searchingly on the open countenance and composed features of the speaker; and the deep and earnest gaze appeared to satisfy him. As the man proceeded, his reluctance seemed gradually to vanish; and the concluding words determined him to pursue the adventure at all hazards. Though past the age of passion or enthusiasm, the image of a young and suffering woman had still a powerful interest for the doctor; and the sentiment of manly pity was, on the present occasion, strongly reinforced by that of curiosity, which, also, the doctor had not outlived. After a short pause, therefore, he expressed his willingness to follow his conductors.

They then entered the cavern. The miners led the way, one of them carrying a torch, and the other a plank, which served as a bridge for passing over the gaps and fissures, which in many places crossed their path. The doctor followed, and the order of march was closed by his travelling companion carrying the other torch.

After a progress of a few minutes, the vault seemed to terminate; and the two leaders, having removed with great effort a huge block of stone, which turned on a secret pivot, discovered a low and narrow passage, which could only be entered singly and in a stooping posture. This inconvenient path, after some hundreds of paces, opened into an immense hall, whose sides, embellished with stalactites of varied and grotesque forms, reflected in all directions the glare of the flambeaux, and produced the effect of a thousand lights.

The floor of this immense cavern was traversed in its centre by a torrent which flowed through a fissure in the rock. Having crossed this melancholy stream by means of the plank, the path passed at some little distance from its banks over a narrow ledge, suspended, as it were, above a dark precipice, whose depth could only be guessed at; and, after having led them painfully up a steep and toilsome ascent, terminated, at length, in a series of caverned halls of different dimensions, whose varied incrustations and transparent columns, startled into splendour by the lights which they carried, almost blinded them with their sudden and dazzling brilliancy. Their progress continued long amid the windings of this vast and splendid labyrinth; and the amazed doctor would gladly have paused more than once both for rest and that he might examine more closely these natural wonders. His guides, however, walked silently and steadily on; and the echoes of their footsteps died solemnly and mournfully away amid the far recesses and beneath the vast and gloomy vaults.

The wearied doctor at length began to think that this subterranean maze was to have no end. It appeared to him, judging from the fatigue and hunger which he began to feel, that he must have walked for many hours.

along this damp and dangerous floor, when he found himself at the entrance of a corridor, whose sides, hewn and wrought with care and regularity, indicated, at length, the handiwork of man. At the further extremity of this artificial passage, a thick iron door creaked on its massive hinges, and disclosed a flight of thirty or forty steps, at the foot of which the two peasants stopped. Up this staircase his first guide alone preceded him, carrying the light; and, on arriving at its summit, a small door, invisible without, was opened from within: and Belgarbo found himself in a saloon, magnificently furnished and warmed by a blazing fire, and in presence of a man of noble appearance who advanced to meet him.

* * * * *

"By my faith," said the doctor, setting down his glass on the table at which he and his host were seated, "the honest fellow was right when he said that I should not repent following him, since I find myself once more in companionship with an old acquaintance—I think that I may venture to say a friend—of my youth. But why was I brought hither with such mysterious precautions?—and why by that infernal route?—A word of yours, Lord of Lueg, would have drawn me to you by the highway, which—unless I am out in my reckoning—must pass very near this hill-fortress of yours."

"I could not be sure," replied Herrmann, "that the memory of our ancient ties would suffice to determine you upon this expedition; and, in the event of your refusal, prudence required that my name should not be disclosed to you. As for the way, it was impossible for me to select a more commodious one, the troops which besiege me occupying all the other approaches to the castle."

"You in a state of siege!" exclaimed the astonished doctor: "wherefore?—by whom?"

To these questions Herrmann replied by a recital of the events with which the reader is already acquainted, adding some particulars which he has yet to learn.

"The ten soldiers," said he, "who were buried beneath the avalanche, which my people had prepared in front of the castle terrace, were speedily extricated from it. They were brought, in a state of insensibility, into this hall, and restored to life. Scarcely had they regained the use of their faculties when we administered to them a sleeping potion, which, in their exhausted condition, soon reconsigned them to unconsciousness. In this state they were carried, by the same route which conducted you hither, till they reached the frontier of Italy. There, a faithful agent, with two covered cars, awaited them, conveyed them to Wipach, and laid them down in the market-place, while its inhabitants were buried in slumber. Thus did I contrive to get rid of these inconvenient guests, without the necessity for more bloodshed, and without compromising the important secret of my defence. With the exception of you alone—of the three men whom you have seen, and of whose fidelity and prudence I am assured—and of myself—no living being knows the avenue by which you have reached this castle."

"And now," said the doctor, after a moment's pause, "what is your intention? Do you reckon upon holding out, with a dozen peasants against the forces of his imperial majesty?"

"It would be mere madness!" said the knight. "A month hence, the ice and snow which render this castle unassailable will be dissolved, and the vigorous attack of a few hours would force an entrance. My design is to withdraw into the state of Venice, to which city I have already transmitted all that I can realize of my property."

"Then the sooner the better," said the doctor. "I marvel that, having a sure retreat at your back, you have not sooner taken the wise step on which you have resolved."

"Ten days ago," replied Herrmann, "I should have abandoned this castle but for the illness of my child, who appears to me too weak to bear removal. It is precisely to assist me in overcoming this difficulty that I have need of your skill. When you have seen my poor girl," continued he, ringing a bell which stood on the table, "you will tell me if it be possible, without destroying her life, to transport her by the route which you have travelled this evening. If not, I must stay here, and perish with Ida."

The large door of the saloon opened, and a servant appeared. "Tell my daughter," said the knight, "that the physician whom I expected is here, and ask if she is ready to receive him."

The servant seemed scarcely conscious of the order which he had received; remained as if turned into stone, with his eye fixed upon the doctor. The strangeness of his demeanour excited the notice of Belgarbo, who met the stupified gaze of the man, and in his turn began to scrutinize his features.

"Well!" cried Herrmann, "why do you linger there? — Did you not here my commands?"

The servant left the room without uttering a word; and Herrmann was about to resume the conversation which his entrance had interrupted, when he was stopped by Belgarbo, who, laying his hand solemnly on the arm of the knight, inquired, in an earnest tone of voice, "Who is that man? — is he well known to you?"

"He is an old servant of our house," replied Herrmann, "who, since, the siege, has discharged in this castle the functions of major-domo."

"Beware of him!" earnestly answered the doctor. "I have looked well upon the lines of his physiognomy, and they speak of no good."

The smile of an instant passed across the features of the knight of Lueg. "You must forgive me," he said, "if I suffer many years of faithful service to outweigh in my mind the loose and experimental rules of a conjectural science."

"Despise not those rules, though you know them not. I have been rarely deceived in their application. Again I say beware of that man! I have read him closely. The prominent cheek-bones, the thin lips, the pointed chin, the sunken eyes, the triangular forehead — these, when they come together, are the unfailing indices of treachery and crime."

"I will not dispute with you," said Herrmann. "I have, however, nothing to fear from that man. He is not one of those whom I intend to make the companions of my flight; and the secret of the subterranean outlet is entirely unknown to him. To this circumstance is owing the grotesque surprise which he exhibited on seeing you here, without being able to divine whence you could have sprung: and the place which I shall select for my retreat will remain equally unknown to him."

Belgarbo received these assurances as an homage paid to science by one whom he had succeeded in convincing; and the conversation returned to the subject which this incident had interrupted. "I have told you," said the knight, "that the declining health of my unhappy child is the only obstacle to my immediate departure. Since her arrival in this castle, my fair girl has drooped daily, and our coming was too sudden for me to make the necessary arrangements for her comfort. I am almost her sole attendant: and that circumstance has forced me to see, more closely than I can well bear to think of, the bloom daily withering on her cheek, and the light fading in her eyes. My poor Ida, the sole remnant of my house, droops her head like a dying lily. To all my representations of the necessity of our immediate removal she answers with looks which seem to assert its utter impossibility in her own case; and when she implores me to leave her here, those same looks add, what her tongue spares me — to die! Doctor! the fortunes of my ancient and unstained house have waned with that

sweet and, I fear me, dying girl. But I cannot leave her here to the chances of that which must ensue upon my departure; and, if her removal cannot be effected with safety, then must Maximilian avenge his minion, and I must remain and perish with the blossom I have reared in vain."

"It shall go hard," said the doctor, after a pause, which did not redeem his voice from faltering—"it shall go hard but we will contrive to remove her as far as my dwelling at Gorice, where she can remain in safety and secrecy till the soft breath of our Italian air has enabled me to restore her to her father, with the roses of the south upon her cheek."

"Could that be effected," said Herrmann, straining the hand of his old and kind friend, "I should owe you a larger debt of gratitude than I could ever pay. But see my child, and judge for yourself. This man will conduct you to my daughter."

The major-domo had just entered, with a lamp in his hand. The doctor rose, and, approaching him, sought to resume the course of his physiological observations upon the repulsive features of the man; but the major-domo escaped further examination for the present, by turning round to lead the way towards the apartment of the Lady Ida: and a moment afterwards the doctor found himself alone with his young and beautiful patient.

When Belgarbo returned into the saloon his cheek was pale, and his eye rose not to meet the glance of the anxious father.

"What think you of my daughter's state?" said the Lord of Lueg, earnestly. "May we prepare to depart?"

"I have arranged with the Lady Ida," said the doctor, "for our departure on the second day from hence.—Lord of Lueg!" he continued, looking quickly up, as he heard the deep and long-drawn inspiration which proclaimed that a heavy weight was taken from the listener's heart—"Herrmann of Lueg! I have no consolation to offer you. We will, at all events, try this journey. It is, on all accounts, necessary, and may be so conducted that Ida shall be no great sufferer from its fatigue. In my quiet dwelling she will be better than amid the anxieties which beset her here on your account; and remember, my friend," he concluded, as he took the hand of the knight, "remember that I speak of both hope and fear when I say that the soft air of the plains is essential to the Lady Ida."

There was a long pause: and the doctor was relieved from a silence which, understanding as he did its meaning, was growing painful to him, when it was at length broken by the tolling of the castle bell. The knight raised his head at the sound, and, as he returned the grasp of Belgarbo's hand, his face was calm, and his voice clear, but mournful.

"Eleven. It is the hour in which this arm unintentionally, but most justly, slew that villain. He perished amid a debauch, all unprepared for the tribunal to which my rash hand dismissed him. That crime, each evening, at this hour, I strive to expiate. Go with me! let us pray for the soul of Pappenheim!—And," he added, after a moment's pause, but in a voice that had lost its clearness and trembled sensibly, "we will pray, too, for my daughter."

On leaving the hall, they were met by the major-domo, with a flambeau in his hand, who conducted them to the door of the chapel, a small edifice, of which it is indispensable, for the understanding of the subsequent events, that we should give some description.

At the extremity of the platform, or forecourt, of the castle of Lueg, on the side fronting its entrance, the rock is rent by a vertical fissure, visible from the outside, and descending to the level of the plain below. At the foot of this chasm, there existed, in ages prior to the time in which our narrative is laid, a reservoir, fed from some neighbouring springs; and, as the castle was, in summer, ill supplied with water, its ancient possessors had taken

advantage of this accidental circumstance to remedy that inconvenience. Over the summit of the fissure, and on the margin of the castle terrace, a little building had been erected, projecting over the edge of the precipice, and furnished with a windlass and pulley. The floor had in its centre an opening like that of a well — and in truth, this building was made to serve the purpose of a well, by the help of two buckets, and a rope some hundred feet in length, by which water was slowly raised from the reservoir in the plain, when the supply from the hills was insufficient for the wants of the castle.

But for many years this slow and laborious mode of supply had been superseded by the discovery of a spring in the side of the rock which shelters the fortress. Herrmann's father, on giving up the well, took it into his head to convert the building which covered it into an oratory. A strong floor was laid down over the opening of the former well; and on the spot was erected an altar, before which a lamp, suspended from the roof, was kept burning. Such was the chapel of Lueg, which exists to this day, although now devoted to profane purposes.

The knight and Belgarbo, having performed their devotions, quitted the chapel. The brow of the former, though sad, had recovered all its serenity. They spoke together like friends of many years, and Herrmann pointed out to the doctor the singular situation, and explained the peculiarities of the castle. At this moment they had reached the grand terrace. A parapet, of no great elevation, separated them from the edge of the precipice. From the platform on which they stood they could perceive, at a fearful depth, the lights of the besiegers in the valley, and the watch-fires of their outpost on the distant heights. To their left was the difficult path which led upward to the platform, with its numerous windings. At their backs the buildings of the dwelling, reared against the rock, seemed to form a portion of it. The air was sharp, and the night dark, although the sky was studded with stars.

Suddenly the knight paused, as if startled by an unexpected sound, and leaned over the parapet, in an attitude of attention. "Who can it be," he said, "that disturbs at this hour the watch of my sentinels? Some one is ascending the path. Come — let us meet him!"

They approached the gate, which was guarded, as usual, by four soldiers, under the orders of the warden. In a few minutes, a breathless man presented himself outside, gave the pass-word, was admitted, and stood before them. — It was the major-domo!

"Whence come you at this hour?" abruptly inquired his master.

"I was going — I thought —" stammered out the terrified servant — "I fancied I heard — give me time to breathe, and I will explain to you."

"Bring a light!" exclaimed the doctor; "let me look once more upon the face of that man! His voice seems parched and husky to me — the truth will have great difficulty in making its way out of his throat!"

The doctor's examination was unfavourable to the major-domo. In vain the latter, having gained time to recover from his surprise, endeavoured to persuade his hearers that he had merely left the castle to discover the cause of some sounds which he asserted he had heard. Belgarbo interrupted his explanation. "Thou liest!" he said. "God knows what has been the motive of thy sally! But I am prepared to swear, by the principles of the science which I profess, that thou art hatching some treason. Lord Herrmann! — I have said it before, and I say it again — beware of that man!"

"By my faith, and I intend to follow your counsel!" said the knight, who had been an attentive spectator of the scene. "His nocturnal ramble, without any plausible motive, is quite enough to confirm your suspicions, and to justify the precautions which I design to adopt. — Frank!" continued he, addressing the warden, "this man is henceforth a prisoner within

the precincts of the castle; and you will not allow him, on any pretext, to pass beyond them. — And thou!" — to the major-domo, "go and fulfil thy functions within; and remember that thy conduct will from this moment be strictly watched. If thou attemptest to pass the limits of this terrace, I will have thee thrown over the precipice!"

On the evening of the following day, the knight and the doctor seated by the fire, occupied themselves in arranging for their departure on the morrow. The three trusty servants of the cavern, admitted secretly into the saloon, received orders to prepare a covered litter, adapted for passing easily along the various defiles of the subterranean route, and warmly lined with skins, for the conveyance of the youthful invalid. A darker cloud than usual rested upon the brow of Herrmann; there was a look of deep melancholy in his eyes, and an almost imperceptible motion about the muscles of his mouth, which told of some gentler feeling, whose influence redeemed and controlled his sterner thoughts, and perhaps prevented some wild outbreak of his rash and fiery spirit. In truth, Herrmann had cause enough for all these emotions, the ruler of which were awakened by the thought that he was about to abandon for ever the castle of his ancestors, and his place in the land; and the gentler by fears for his child, who seemed altogether unable to endure the fatigue of removal, and whose farewell to him that night had been spoken in words and darkened by forebodings which had almost broken his strong heart.

The doctor saw and understood all that was passing in the breast of his companion, and strove to lead him into the discussion of projects for the future with some success. The two friends sat long together; and it was not till the turret-clock struck eleven that Herrmann rose to proceed to his accustomed devotions; and, pressing the hand of the doctor, intreated him to visit the couch of the invalid once more before he retired to rest.

As he left the hall, the knight found the major-domo waiting at his accustomed post with his lighted torch. For a moment he hesitated how to act towards this man, whose presence had become odious to him; and he almost resolved to take the light from him and proceed alone. But, after an instant's reflection, he determined to let him discharge his ordinary service for that night, and motioned to him to lead the way.

When he reached the gate of the chapel, the Lord of Lueg turned suddenly round to look upon the face of his servant. The sinister expression of the man's features struck him more forcibly than it had ever done before. All the doctor's suspicions flashed strongly through his mind, and he came to the resolution of having them cleared up on the spot. Whilst he was meditating on the means to be pursued for this purpose, the major-domo had left him as usual; and, imagining that his master would at once commence his devotions, he proceeded stealthily to place his flambeau on the edge of the parapet. The knight, having repassed the door of the chapel, followed the man's steps, and seized him by the arm as he turned to leave the wall on which he had left the light.

"Listen!" said he, as he dragged him forcibly back towards the chapel, and compelled him to kneel before the altar; "listen! — I have somewhat to say to thee. Here, in the presence of the God who hears and sees all things, will I be satisfied from thine own lips as to the designs of which thou art accused. I will trust thee again if thou wilt swear to me here, by thy hopes of eternal salvation, that thou art not a traitor!"

"Here! — oh! not here!" screamed the wretched man, in a voice shrill with terror. "Fly! — fly! — take me from this spot, and you shall know all!"

"Ah! villain!" exclaimed the knight, as with a strong arm he held down the struggling wretch, "thou wert then about to betray me! — Go on! — Confess all — here, before God, who is listening to thee!"

The screams of the major-domo rose wilder and shriller, and the hair stood straight up on his head. "I am guilty!" he cried: "but, oh! fly! — fly! — or we are both lost! — the abyss is about to open beneath us!"

But his desperate efforts were vain. The knight, attributing the terrors of the writhing villain to religious horror, held him forcibly down on the fearful spot in front of the altar. At this moment a loud explosion arose from the foot of the rock. The lamp of the shrine was extinguished, and a deep silence succeeded the shrieks of agony which terrified the warders. The nearest sentinel on parade fancied he heard after some moments the sound of groans, and at length gave the alarm. The chapel was entered; and a frightful spectacle presented itself.

Herrmann had died instantly. A ball from a falconet, guided by a line and lead, descending through a hole bored for the purpose in the floor to the foot of the rock, had passed through his lungs. A splinter from one of the beams, broken off by the murderous projectile, had pierced the entrails of the major-domo, and mangled them frightfully. Some gold pieces, the fruits of his treachery, which he carried concealed beneath his garments, were buried in the dreadful wound. He lingered for an hour in hideous torments; and confessed, before he expired, the horrible means which he had concerted with the besiegers for the destruction of his master, and to which he had himself become the victim.

The Lord of Lueg was spared, by his own dreadful fate, the bitter pang of learning that his daughter was dead. The young and beautiful Ida had expired in the arms of the Doctor Belgarbo at the very same moment that her father was so suddenly cut off.

The Lordship of Lueg, on the extinction of the family of its ancient owners, devolved to that of Cobentzel, in whose possession it still remains.

The ball which terminated the life of Herrmann of Lueg is still shown to the curious who visit the castle. It is half buried in the vaulted roof of the old chapel; and the traces of its progress have never been effaced. The peasants of the neighbourhood yet tell many a tale, which tradition has handed down to them, besides this fatal one, of THE BEAR OF CARNIOLA.

JANE.

BY THE HON. MRS. NORTON.

[From "The Gem," for 1835.]

"Drive on, postillion; my master intends to walk — he knows his way about here." Such, one sweet evening in July, 1813, were the words uttered by an important *gentleman's gentleman*, and caught eagerly by the villagers of Marsden — idlers, who watched the rapid course of Sir Arnold Stepney's travelling carriage, with much eagerness and admiration.

The scenes around him were indeed familiar to Sir Arnold's heart. Years had passed away, circumstances had changed with him; but fortune's favoured son forgot not the friends of his infancy. It was to visit the relative who had watched over those early days, that he now sought the obscure village of Marsden. Mistress Phoebe Allen was one of two sisters, daughters to a farmer in the neighbourhood: the beauty of both was so remarkable, that strangers were in the habit of visiting the farm on different

pretexts, merely to obtain a glimpse of these roses in the desert. Sir Henry Stepney, (then a widower,) saw, admired, and finally proposed for the younger; but Minny Allen, though her beauty might have done honour to a court, was not fitted, by education and circumstances, to be the wife of a proud baronet: their union was not happy; and, after five or six years, she died—Sir Henry said, of a decline—Miss Phoebe Allen thought, of a broken heart.

The offspring of this marriage was consigned to the care of his aunt when his father went abroad; and was allowed to remain there, neglected, if not forgotten, till the death of Sir Henry's son, by his first wife, reminded him he had still the right of a father over the young Arnold. From this time Miss Phoebe Allen saw but little of him, and for the last eleven years merely knew that he lived—was clever and handsome—and still remembered her, as his short but affectionate letters proved. As Sir Arnold now strolled through the well-known fields; as he paused at the church-yard gate, and looked up at the old spire, while a sudden rush of many feelings, crowding into his heart, produced a sensation almost of pain—he remembered the quiet piety of his instructress, the pure and passionate enthusiasm for holy things, even for trivial forms and ceremonies connected with them, that burned in his soul, when his home was with her; and though, had he been called upon, he could eloquently have explained many changes in his feelings and opinions since that time—though years had altered his entire and unreasoning confidence in the correctness of his kind relative's views on all subjects, into pity for some of her prejudices, and contempt for others; yet, as Sir Arnold Stepney looked on that spire, and remembered that mental confidence, he heaved a short bitter sigh.

His attention was, however, speedily riveted on another object. As he turned to pass on, he saw, on one of the mounds of turf which cover the graves of the poorer classes, a girl sleeping. He started, advanced cautiously a few steps, and was confirmed in his opinion, that, in all the countries he had visited, he had never seen anything so incomparably lovely. A quantity of pale brown hair fell back from her forehead; and the sunshine, beaming full upon a very brilliant complexion, gave a sort of glory to her features. Confused recollections of his favourite pictures, groups by Raphael, angels by Guido, flashed across Arnold's imagination: something else, less poetical, apparently flashed across it, for he suddenly knelt and imprinted a fervent kiss on the brow of the object before him. "Don't," said the waking beauty, passing her hand across her eyes; "don't, Wallace!" Arnold Stepney's sword was already, in imagination, through Wallace's body, when the girl rose, and turned her full dark eyes upon him.

There is, generally speaking, a striking difference in the expression of the same features, in slumber and awake. Arnold expected to be startled by the flashing beauty of those eyes, but, though his admiration of her did not abate, he was struck by the *want of change* in her face. There was little timidity—little animation in her countenance; but, for an instant, an expression of earnest and intense fondness beamed from it, while she still expected to behold the object of her dream. She saw Arnold, coloured, and sat down again on the grave. Sir Arnold smiled, and addressed a few words to her, spoken lightly and in jest; to which her confusion prevented her giving very satisfactory replies.

He would, perhaps, have said more; but, at this moment, the expression of fondness returned to the features he was gazing upon: his eye followed her's to the gate of the church-yard, and beheld a very handsome, bold-looking young man, in whose countenance surprise contended with extreme displeasure. As she advanced a step to meet him, he came forward hastily, took off his hat to Sir Arnold, and then, holding her hand, murmured—

"Jane, do you know you are doing very wrong?"—"Do not say so," said Sir Arnold; "I have been asking her some questions it was only courteous to answer;" and he left them. When he had proceeded a few steps, an irresistible impulse prompted him to pause and look round. The young pair still stood at the churchyard gate; Jane's waist was encircled by Wallace's arm—her head leaned against his shoulder; but her eyes—those eyes her lover was watching—followed her new acquaintance across the meadow, and Sir Arnold Stepney was contented.

"And so," thought Arnold, as he laid his head on his pillow, after a day of inquiry—"this beautiful being, educated beyond her rank, not from charity, but caprice, with all the poetry of love written in her face, is now a servant at the mill! an orphan from her birth; dependent for support on the charity of strangers; subservient to the control of harsh and coarse minds; and so unaccustomed to the words of kindness that"—and here the handsome form of her young and eloquent comforter intruded on his memory. As the outward world closed upon his drowsy senses, a bright world of his own opened before him:—the eternal sunshine gilding that beautiful brow; the look of fondness in those eyes, for ever beaming on himself; and her young mind expanded and improved under his careful instructions, till every thought and feeling should be interwoven with his image. When Sir Arnold Stepney rose in the morning, and the fresh breeze blew through the open casement, he smiled to think of the intense happiness it had given him, while dreaming, to suppose himself necessary to the existence of Jane, the servant at the mill. Three months, however, passed away, and Sir Arnold was still at Marsden. At the close of a red autumn day, in October, he stood leaning his back against the low churchyard wall; and on the opposite mound of turf sat the object of his solicitude, her hands clasped in her lap, and her eyes fixed on his, as he delivered his parting words, in tones where affection and command were strangely blended: "You will read the books I have given you, Jane; and you will think of me while you read them: the passages I have marked must be read with the greatest attention; and all that you do not comprehend, you can note down, and when I come again, I will explain it to you." There was a pause, and the tears gathered in her eyes. "I shall be here probably in April, certainly not later than May; and, by that time, I expect my sweet Jane will have thoroughly mastered the subjects I have left for her consideration; and amongst them, Jane," continued he, while his voice slightly altered, "you will consider of your future situation. Now, good bye, my poor girl: mind all I have said, and especially don't allow Wallace to kiss you till I return." A faint smile answered his own, as she looked up from the shelter of his arms: it lingered till his form was lost in the distance; and then she sat down, and wept bitterly.

As Sir Arnold's travelling carriage rolled swiftly through the village, he thought over all that had passed since he came to Marsden:—the changes in things and people—the kindness and simplicity of Mistress Phoebe Allen—and lastly, that he might dwell on it the longer, he thought of Jane: the perfect symmetry of her round full figure—the unrivalled brilliancy of her complexion—the intense tenderness of her large dark eyes—the eagerness and aptitude she showed for instruction—the purity of her uncontaminated mind—the fascination of her gentle manner—the music of her happy laugh—the timid worship she paid him as to some superior being—and the wild charm thrown round her by the struggling of a naturally clear and ardent mind, out of the darkness which surrounded it. "Yes, my sweet Jane; yes, we shall be very happy," murmured Sir Arnold, as he kissed the glossy braid of pale brown hair he had drawn from his pocket-book. He closed the book, and raised his eyes: the carriage was turning the corner of the street of low white houses, which formed the village of

Marsden: at the garden gate of one of the neatest of these, stood a young man gazing intently on the traveller; their eyes met: "Wallace!" muttered Sir Arnold, involuntarily. The carriage whirled past, and Wallace turned slowly into his own little comfortable home: he sate down, and looked round on the well-known walls—the brightly-coloured prints, from the story of Ruth, and the Prodigal Son;—the polished spar ornaments on the chimney-piece—the old carved oak chairs; all the little comforts and luxuries of which he had hoped to make *her* the mistress. "God protect her—God protect her!" exclaimed he, as he buried his head in his hands, and groaned in the bitterness of his heart.

An hour had nearly passed away, and Wallace still sate in the same position—his folded arms on the table, and his head bowed upon them. Suddenly he started up. "Yes," said he, aloud; "I will do it—I *will* do it, though my heart burst in the effort. What a selfish wretch I have been, to shrink from warning her for my own sake! No, let her hate me—let her cast me off for ever—let her refuse to speak to me again; but I *will* warn her of the ruin, and misery, and disgrace, she is bringing on herself."

In the church yard where Arnold left her, Jane still sate—her eyes red and swollen with weeping, and her hands listlessly clasped. Wallace drew his breath heavily as he advanced. "Jane," said he, "I am come to comfort you."—"You cannot comfort me, Wallace: indeed, I ought not to want comfort; and I am glad some one coming has reminded me how foolish it is to sit crying here." So saying, Jane rose, and would have passed on; but he seized her hand with a tremulous grasp:—"Hear me for two minutes, for the sake of old days; for the sake of old days, dear Jane, *do* hear me." She stood passive beneath his touch, her eyes bent on the ground, while he vainly endeavoured to utter some articulate sound. His cheek blanched; his lip quivered; his whole frame shook with irresistible emotion: he sate down on the mound she had just quitted, and, covering his face, repeated her name in a smothered voice. The sound seemed to give him tranquillity: he rose, and stood by her side. "Jane," said he, firmly, "we have met here often before; and for the sake of those happy days, happier than I shall ever spend again; for the sake of the time when I knew you innocent, and believed you mine; hear *his* voice patiently who has so often cheered you when others were unkind. You are preparing for yourself misery, and ruin, and horror—you are drawing down on your head the curse of God, and the scorn of all good men—you are. O Jane! do not distrust my words, do not think I speak as a lover. Heaven knows I could have seen you married to another, and not murmured, if *you* were happy; but you know, Jane, you cannot look forward to that—you know that when you renounce the lot of the poor man's wife, it is *only* to become the rich man's mistress: and, knowing this, I ask you, I *only* ask you, to weigh well your fate, before you fix it for ever." He paused, and proceeded solemnly—"While you live, Jane, and while I live, it is impossible that I should not be interested about you; but it is for you to decide, and that *now*, whether that interest shall be beneficial to yourself. I have loved you fervently; I *do* love you fervently. If you will forsake this wild and terrible dream that has tempted you, if you will only promise me to try to forget it, I will make you my wife, in the face of God and man, within three Sundays. I know you might be the bride of richer men; I know I am not educated as you have been; I have lived among poor people, and I have earned my bread, and my father's bread, and have struggled on, from day to day, with a strong arm and a willing heart, without being able to read any book but the Bible: but this also I know, Jane, that my arm shall wither, and my heart grow cold, before harm shall come nigh you which human aid can avert, or before you shall want what human toil can obtain. And this I know and feel, that, were all the knowledge, power, pride, and glory, of

the earth mine, I could not love you better than I do. One word more, Jane, and I have done. If the lot I offer you be such as you can accept, turn to me; and, from the moment your head rests on this bosom, never shall word of reproach or doubt come from my lips: but if—"and his voice sunk to a hoarse whisper, "if you can *not* accept it, say to me only, 'It is too late, Wallace,' and, from that time, I will trouble you no more; unless, indeed, an hour *should* come, an hour of distress, in which there should be none, as of old, to comfort you but me."

There was a long, miserable pause. The chill autumn wind whistled through the cypress boughs, and waved the long grass on the graves: the clock chimed eight, and the song of returning labourers, or the shrill laugh of children, mingled with the busy hammering at the forge in the village, and the regular beat of the wheels of the mill; but distinctly, amid all these sounds, the gasping breath of that motionless pair struck on the air; and, clear as a church bell on a still evening, the slow words came from the lips of the unhappy girl:—"It is too late, Wallace." A dimness came over his eyes; a sound, as of the rushing of waters, was in his ears for a few moments; and, when he woke from his trance, she was gone.

All that long night Wallace lay in the church-yard: when the rain came, he felt it not. When the wind blew he heeded it not. Day after day passed; but what to him was day or night—life or labour? It was too late; too late to save Jane—his beautiful, his innocent Jane. Innocent! how the word froze on his heart!

Sir Arnold Stepney did not arrive the following April, nor even the April after that: two years passed, and most of the village of Marsden forgot they had ever seen him. Jane appeared to have forgotten it too: she grew neither paler nor thinner; she was always cheerful, sometimes gay: the only perceptible difference was, that she was, if possible, more gentle, and that, at the village dances, where she had so often excited the envy of the miller's daughter, she was no longer seen.

It was not till June, 1815, that Mistress Phoebe Allen's nephew once more made his appearance in the home of his boyhood. Time had made one other change: his kind old aunt was no more, and he had returned hastily from abroad, in the vain hope of giving her the satisfaction of seeing him before she died. All she had to leave was left to him; and it was ostensibly for the purpose of looking over her papers, and giving directions as to the disposal of the house, that Sir Arnold now came to Marsden. It was the second evening after his arrival; and he was walking with an eager step up and down the narrow shrubbery of the cottage garden, when a timid hand hastily undid the wicket at the end, and Jane stood before him.

"Arnold! dear Arnold!"—"My own Jane!"

The next day Sir Arnold Stepney's travelling carriage left Marsden for the last time. As it passed through the narrow lane which divided the meadow by the river from the churchyard, the master of that splendid equipage broke silence: "Look, Jane! there is the spot where I first saw you—you will never see it again." His companion gazed from beneath the shadow of the green trees which guarded the lane, to the broad, still sunshine which slept on mound and monument. At that familiar spot, which Arnold pointed out to her notice, knelt the figure of a man, apparently engaged in earnest prayer. As the sound of wheels roused him, he started up: for one wild instant, he stretched out his arms to the carriage; it passed as he staggered back, and fell with his face on the grave. "Wallace!" exclaimed Jane, in a tone of agony, as she shrunk for an instant from her lover's side: and then she turned round; and, with a look of wild appeal for future protection, she hid her face on his bosom and wept.

The next day a little girl from the mill opened the gate of Wallace's garden, and, after knocking once or twice, ineffectually, at the cottage door,

gently stole round to the lattice window, and, pushing aside the honeysuckles and roses which grew thickly round it, called him by name. He did not answer: pale and motionless, his clothes soiled with the damp earth, his hair pushed erect from his forehead, Wallace sat absorbed in his own thoughts. "Mr. Wallace," said the little messenger, "Jane told me yesterday" — "What! who told you? Did you not say Jane told you something? Come in, Lucy, come in, and tell me what she said: say it in her tone, if you can; — *her* tone! — O God! when shall I hear a voice like her's again?" — "She only said," (and, as if to comply with his request, the child threw a melancholy sweetness into her voice,) "she only said, *When I am gone, go to Wallace's cottage, and give him this letter, and tell him to read it for my sake.*" — "The letter, the letter!" said Wallace; and, as he spoke, he snatched the paper from her, and devoured the contents. The child watched him till he apparently came to the conclusion, and then said, timidly, "O sir, is it true that Jane is gone away for ever?" Wallace looked wildly up: then taking her hands and gazing in her face, he said slowly, "For ever, Lucy, for ever and ever. She is gone from you, from me, from all good friends, from Heaven — *for ever.*" Terrified at the wildness of his manner, the little girl stole timidly away the moment he had released her, and fled from the cottage, while Wallace again and again perused the few lines, which were all that remained to him of one *very* dear to his heart.

It was a short, melancholy farewell. There was no attempt at justification, no description of the steps that led on to her ruin. She neither appealed to his feelings, nor entreated him to forget her. It was written in a subdued and heart-broken spirit; and there was a consciousness of the loss of his esteem, and a fearful ebrinking from the future, which Wallace felt bitterly. He thought of his own manly, honest love, and the many little offices of kindness which she had repaid by forsaking him; and, in the growing conviction of her worthlessness, he crushed the letter in his hand, and flung it from him. But with the scenes which he recalled, came back the image of Jane as she was: — Jane, with all her smiles and tears, stood before him: with all the purity and simplicity of old days, shining like a glory round her brow. His arm dropped, his eyes grew dim; and he sat down, and wept like a little child.

Perhaps no human heart is a competent judge of the strength of those temptations allotted to others. In endeavouring to place ourselves in their situation, we involuntarily mingle our own motives and feelings with those which are supposed to actuate them, and throw our own colouring over the circumstances which surround them. To Wallace, vanity appeared the chief motive of Jane's desertion. He saw her, dazzled by the situation — intoxicated with the attentions of her noble lover, bartering her peace on earth and her hopes of Heaven, for the enjoyment of guilty splendour: and no wonder if he thought the temptation inadequate.

But other and far stronger motives bore the unhappy girl onwards to destruction. Taken from the workhouse, to be the spoilt plaything of a childless old lady, her education had been such as to place an insuperable bar between her and those with whom it was her destiny to be associated in after years. Her protectress was what is technically termed a thoroughly *worldly* woman; and while she alternately caressed and scolded her orphan favourite, she forgot all but her own amusement in the possession of such a novel object of attraction.

That fearful responsibility, the training of a human soul, entered not into her thoughts; and she shrank, with an engrossing selfishness, from the consideration of that period, which, while it left Jane desolate, would terminate her own existence in this world. She died without a will, and without making any provision for her unhappy protégée. Those who inherited her

property, and who had watched with jealousy those schemes for Jane's temporary benefit which, they thought, would surely end in her usurping *their* rights, treated her with the utmost harshness: they denied the claim to *any* part, of one to whom they expected *all* would be given; and, at the age of seventeen, Jane found herself without a home, without a friend in the world.

At this period the miller (a man of substance in the little village of Marsden,) touched by her forlorn situation, took Jane in. But his wife resented this burden upon their establishment, and his daughter looked with an envious eye on the beauty of the new inmate of the mill. From a humble companion, Jane gradually sunk to a neglected dependant, and, finally, to the condition of a servant; while the severity and bitter taunts she had to endure from her self-constituted mistresses, rendered her situation still more painful. Of the tears which these scenes occasionally wrung from her, there was one pitying witness; and, though Jane's native and acquired refinement but ill prepared her for the homely caresses and professions of attachment of the villager Wallace, still his constant kindness, and

———"the strong
Necessity of loving"——

which exists in the human heart, prompted her to devote to him affections which were trampled on by those to whom she owed gratitude; and she looked calmly forward to the time when Wallace should make her his wife.

The spell was, however, soon broken. Sir Arnold Stepney came, and recalled all the dreams of perfection which had employed her youthful imagination. She was with a being as much superior to those she had long lived amongst, as she herself was to those who now surrounded her. She was with one whose tastes and sympathies were like her own, who understood her feelings and felt with her; and her sensations were such as his may be supposed, who, after long and weary wandering in the desert, suddenly hears the sound of a human voice. For three months she saw Arnold almost daily: for two years she regularly received and answered his letters, and felt a woman's pride, as she wept over their passionate eloquence, in that affection which absence, and the jarring of other and more immediate interests, had no power to destroy.

He returned to claim the young heart he had won. And happy are those who, in recurring to their own temptations, can feel their right to scorn the weakness of his victim. Her's was not a vicious mind. Properly trained and regulated, her lot in life might have been happier or more glorious. She might, by a different direction of the same feelings, have been a heroine, a martyr, or a saint: for what is love, after all, but a strong superstition?

* * * * *

"My own love, I cannot bear to think of the solitary evening you will spend," said the master of Stepney Castle, as he looked back into the room he was leaving, crowded with every article of comfort and luxury that ingenuity could devise. "I do not think I *can* go after all," added he, closing the door, and walking back to his beautiful companion. "Now, Arnold, for shame; has it not been all settled? and you say you have not seen Mrs. Stepney for eight years; you must not be so undutiful to your rich Indian aunt: and besides, you have never left me since we were——since we have been together——nearly a year! Why, you will grow weary of me at this rate." And Jane shook back the long ringlets from her face, and fixed her fond dark eyes on his. "*Weary!* my Jane," said her lover; and so deeply was the impossibility impressed on his own mind, that he did not even attempt to persuade her of it. But, though this was the first evening

Sir Arnold spent from home, it was not the last. Society regained its claim upon him—a claim he was most willing to allow; and before three years had passed away, Jane had learned to dread the hour of her lover's departure as the eve of a long separation, and faintly to prefer a prayer impatiently listened to, that he would return as soon as he could.

For a length of time, however, Jane was contented. Naturally humble and confiding, she neither expected that he would devote his whole time to her, nor did she imagine that, by being less in his company, she should lose her place in his heart. Alas! she forgot that while she sate alone, dreaming of the hours she had spent, or hoped to spend, with her idol, other hopes other pursuits, animated *him*: other voices engaged his attention, and the solitude of Stepney Castle was exchanged for the society of the gay, the witty, and the noble. It was one bright summer's morning, when Sir Arnold was expected home, after an absence of three weeks, (the longest she could remember,) that the first flash of that light broke upon her, to which she might never close her eyes again. She was concluding her toilette, unconsciously perhaps, with more care than usual; and, as she sate before the large mirror, twining those long bright curls round her fingers, she thought over all the days, weeks, and months, that had rolled so rapidly away since she came to Stepney Castle:—the mornings of study, the beautiful twilights, the red sunsets on the waters, gilding the sails of the little boat in which she and Arnold used to glide along; and, as she involuntarily compared his unremitting attention then, with the gradual change of habits which had stolen upon him, the sudden conviction of his belonging, as it were, to another world, (a world from which a strong fascination had lured him for a time, but to which he *must* return,) struck on her heart. The long mass of hair she had begun to braid fell on her shoulders; and as her eyes encountered her own image in the glass, she smiled bitterly at the pale, fixed horror which, for a moment, overspread her features. A circumstance occurred soon afterwards, unimportant in itself, but increased in magnitude by the disturbance of her mind. Sir Arnold had returned; and in the evening, while he lay stretched on a sofa near the long windows that opened on the lawn, she sate on a low stool by his side, endeavouring to amuse and interest him. Perhaps her efforts were the more unsuccessful, because she was inwardly dispirited: be that as it may, Sir Arnold suddenly raised his head, and, in the midst of one of those sweet bursts of low laughter which he had so often sworn were music to his soul, exclaimed,—“Don't, Jane; you weary me.” Had a thunder-bolt fallen, it could not have had a more startling effect on her mind. For a moment she sate mute and motionless; then, wildly rising and flinging herself on her knees by him, while the long curls of her bowed head floated over his breast, she said, in a tone of agony, “Arnold, O Arnold, do not forsake me!”—“Poh! Jane, you are growing peevish,” said her lover, as he rose angrily, and left the apartment. Jane passed her fingers hurriedly across her brow, as if she sought to persuade herself it was only a dream; but in vain—it was all over: the fearful consciousness was in her heart, that she depended not on the esteem and respect of the object of her affection, but on a feeling that circumstances might alter, caprice lessen, and time annihilate, the consciousness that bound her by no tie but that of love—Arnold was weary of her! From that time a restless anxiety took the place of that confidence in his attachment which had made her so happy. Could she have read Arnold's thoughts better, she might have retained her influence, at least for a time; but even her love injured her. Timid in expressing her feelings and ideas to one whose mighty mind seemed to her to have the power of comprehending all things, she always felt, and forced her lover to remember, that they were not *equals*; and often did Arnold decide, with a feeling of disappointment, that she was cold or dull, when, could she but have given

utterance to all that died upon her tongue, his heart and imagination would equally have decided in her favour. His vague hopes of educating her as the being he could love, of imbuing her with his own principles, and teaching her to seize with readiness his favourite theories, were crushed, from the belief that he had over-rated the powers of her mind. Perhaps, had she learned instead to play the harp, and sing his favourite Italian airs, he might have felt more satisfied; but, as it was, Sir Arnold Stepney was weary of his choice.

During the three years last passed, Jane had seen few strangers, and those few were such of Arnold's companions as chose to prefer a good dinner at Stepney Castle, after a hard day's hunting, to riding back to their bachelor homes. From these scenes of riotous merriment Jane shrunk with native delicacy, and some bitterness: it was on such occasions that she felt most deeply the false position she held in Arnold's home; and the feeling increased her dislike to those who occupied his mind, though only for a few hours, in a manner which appeared to her so unworthy of him.

To these casual acquaintances must be added one of a different class, and residing near them. The venerable clergyman of Stepney had frequently, during Arnold's long absences (at first in consequence of the entreaties of the latter, and afterwards from real interest in Jane's character,) taken pity upon her loneliness, repeating to his unwilling heart the words of his Divine Master, that he was "not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel." Often, with earnest zeal and sanguine hopes of success, he had endeavoured to wean that naturally pure mind from the trammels of sin: often had he pressed on her acceptance tracts, and histories of persons who had ended a long course of sin and temptation in a life of holiness. But, though Jane's deep gratitude and sweetness of temper led her always to listen with respect and patience, his was not a tongue, in spite of the doctrines it upheld, to cope with the fearless energy of that eloquence with which Arnold was gifted; and Jane's clear understanding revolted at the strained and affected sentimentality which gave, as objects of imitation, heroes and heroines who obtained a negative happiness, by turning to heaven after all the excitements of earth were over; seeking God only when forsaken of men, and discovering the principles on which they should have acted, when the unresisted temptation had passed away.

Her earthly punishment was, however, at hand; and a heavy one it was. Sir Arnold Stepney entered the library at the Castle one morning, and paused for a few minutes when he had closed the door. He looked to the farther end of the long room, as if to assure himself that the object of his search was there, and then advanced. There was a hesitation in his naturally firm and proud step, of which he himself was perhaps unconscious, but which caught the quick ear of his companion instantly; and, as she turned and rose from the little reading table, there was an ill-concealed expression of fear on her countenance. Sir Arnold's manner had, for some time past, been so cold, that it had increased her natural timidity and reserve; and she allowed him to sit down by her without daring to ask what had vexed or agitated him. The long silence which followed alarmed her: she raised her eyes, and encountered those of her lover fixed sadly upon her. He turned away, and opened the book she had been reading. It was one of those he had given her at Marsden; and the sudden recollection nearly unmanned him. With a strong effort he broke silence: "Jane, I have something to communicate which, I fear, will give you pain — something I thought it wiser, kinder, to tell you than to write; will you hear it patiently?" She did not answer: her gaze was riveted on his face with an expression of wild inquiry, and her parted lips stiffened and grew pale. "To write!" thought she, "does he already image to himself our eternal separation? God help me! God forgive me!" Sir Arnold paused, and shrunk

from the expression of her eyes : she saw this, and, suddenly flinging herself on his neck and burying her face on his shoulders, she murmured, "*Now, Arnold — now, dear Arnold, tell me — I will bear it, whatever it is.*" With a grasp that trembled even in its strength, Sir Arnold unclasped the hands that clung around him, and stood up. "Jane, I — I am going to be married. I am going to be married, and we must part. I have provided for you to the best of my ability ; and, I trust, if ever you want aid, of any sort, you will write to me. I will always befriend you, Jane ; I will always — Jane — Jane !" interrupted he, in a tone half soothing, half reproachful, as the unhappy girl sunk at his feet, and kneeling, with her clasped hands pressed hard upon her bosom, vainly endeavoured to utter some words of entreaty. Could she have poured forth the wild appeal that rose and swelled in her heart, its passionate eloquence might have made Sir Arnold pause before he for ever relinquished his claim on her love ; but even *then*, even in that moment of overwhelming agony, she felt the spell that bound her in his presence, and remained mutely kneeling, till her limbs slackened, and her pulse grew cold, and Sir Arnold lifted her unconscious form and placed it on the sofa.

It was from the old clergyman whom we have already mentioned, that Sir Arnold Stepney received the last farewell of his once beloved Jane. It was very short.

"In refusing the provision you have generously assigned me, I am actuated by no motive of pride ; but by the conviction, that, while I am young, I should seek to support myself, rather than depend on one to whom I no longer belong. I am now glad that I could not say all I wished the day you told me of your marriage : it would have given pain, without altering a resolution which must have been formed long before you broke it to me.

"Farewell, dear Arnold ! I am sensible that, in all the past, I have only myself to blame ; and that God may bless you for ever, and that she you have chosen may love you as I have loved you, is the earnest prayer of your unhappy Jane."

For more than six weeks Jane remained at Stepney, in the house of the kind old rector, confined to her bed with a low fever. At the end of that time, feeling herself gradually getting better, she renewed her solicitations that he would endeavour to procure for her the situation of governess, or *bonne*, in some respectable family. This he promised to do ; and after some trouble, and many inquiries after situations, for which Jane was peculiarly disqualified, from her ignorance of the usual accomplishments, it was decided that she should accept the charge of two little boys, from four to six years old, who had just returned with their father from the Continent. The last evening she was to spend at Stepney arrived, and she was walking in the rectory garden, listening to kind words of admonition from her aged friend. He paused ; and, leaning wearily against the gate, she looked down the quiet village : a party on horseback were coming through it, and she fixed her eyes on the foremost of these. "Heavens, how beautiful !" exclaimed Jane, as the object of her attention, a young and lovely female, suddenly curbed the spirited animal she rode, and laughingly looked back at her companions. The horse, startled at the severity of the correction, reared almost perpendicularly ; Jane uttered a faint scream : but the graceful rider firmly kept her seat, and proudly put up her lip, and raised her haughty black eyes, as her steed descended into his natural position. "Bravo ! my Laura." The words were uttered by another of the party, and well Jane knew the voice. She shrank back out of sight ; she would have shrank into the earth, had it been possible : and it was some months before those proud eyes, and the sound of those horses' hoofs, ceased to haunt her dreams.

Years passed away, and Jane still remained in the house to which the old clergyman of Stepney had recommended her: her youngest charge was, however, about to leave her, and she sat ruminating on the necessity of another change in her prospects, when the door of the study opened, and the master of the house entered. Mr. Morris was a widower between forty and fifty, and had treated Jane with the most uniform kindness. "I am so sorry you are to leave my boys," said he with a half sigh, as, after a gentle smile of greeting, she resumed her seat. "And I, sir, am *very* sorry;" and her voice faltered over the words. "I know, I feel that you are, Jane; but why should you leave them? Come, you have known their father long enough to judge whether he could make you happy; and, indeed, I cannot bear to part with you." Jane drew away the hand he had taken, and covered her face, while the scalding tears trickled through her fingers. For a few moments she gave way to her emotion; and then, with a face as pale as death, but in a calm voice, she replied, "Mr. Morris, I will not deceive you; I am not fit to be the wife of any man." Alarm, horror, and incredulity, showed themselves alternately on the face of the person she addressed: he sat motionless, till she attempted to leave the room; then he rose, and detained her with a firm, though gentle hold. "Jane, I have known you for seven years," said he; "for seven years I have seen you almost daily, and never in that time have I seen anything but what excited my respect and admiration: you may have been unfortunate; but, so convinced am I that you are not naturally vicious, that I will marry you—yes, I will marry you in spite of all." Never, perhaps, had Jane felt her degradation so deeply as at that moment. The conscious tone of generosity, the security of her consent, passed bitterly through her mind; and then, for one wild instant, she figured herself his wife. It would not do: she remembered Arnold, and shrank from the idea of enduring the love of another.

It was the evening of that day, and Jane was endeavouring, for the fortieth time, to read, through her tears, the advertisements for situations in the *Morning Post*, when her eye suddenly caught the words "Stepney Castle." She read the paragraph, and felt a cold chill fall on her heart.

ELOPEMENT IN HIGH LIFE.—The beautiful and accomplished mistress of Stepney Castle has, we understand, quitted home with Captain B., of the Guards, leaving her three infant children without the protection of a parent, Sir Arnold Stepney being absent."

Within six weeks from this time Jane was on her road to Stepney, to become governess of those three forsaken children, while Sir Arnold went to recover his health and spirits on the Continent. "No, said she, it is impossible he should know me again even if we *do* meet;" and she looked intently at her own form in the glass. An adventure which took place on the road, served to encourage her in the certainty that even those who had known her best, would not recognize the bright, graceful Jane, in the thin, pale melancholy-looking person, whose small trunk was directed, "Mrs. Farrell, Stepney Castle." At one of the stages of her journey she could not obtain an inside place in the coach, and was endeavouring to ascend the heavy vehicle, when some one respectfully proffered his arm, saying, "You are faint, let me help you." Though Jane had not heard that kind, cheerful voice, for more than ten years, she knew it immediately; and the word "Wallace" rose to her lips and died away again. He assisted her up, and then turned to a sweet-tempered-looking young woman, with these words, "Now, Mary."—"Put Jane up first," answered she; and a little rosy, smiling girl, three years of age, took her place by the traveller to Stepney. "He has called her Jane, out of love for my memory," thought the latter, and the thought touched her. For eleven miles of that weary journey, those happy voices blended in her ear; and little did Wallace dream, while he talked of their home at Marsden to his young wife, who sat beside him.

"This, Sir Arnold, is the person I have selected to take charge of your little ones, during your absence," said the Rector of Stepney, as he dropped Jane's hand. She felt faint at the thought of his turning to gaze at her, but she had time to recollect herself. "Send for the children, Mr. B.," said Arnold, without lifting his heavy eyes from the distant trees of the long avenue. Then, as they stole quietly into the library, he rose. "Mrs. Farrell," said he, as his glance wandered from one to another, "these are to be the objects of your care—you will find them very docile; and look well to Gerard, for he is a sickly child, and he was *his mother's favourite*." Not till these words, pronounced with some difficulty, did Arnold turn to look at Jane. It was with inexpressible bitterness that she felt he did not recognise her; her, who had so earnestly persuaded herself it was *impossible* with her hair tucked away under her close cap, and the lines which sorrow had drawn on her features.

For two years Sir Arnold remained abroad. During that time Jane enjoyed comparative happiness in the affection of those dear little ones. But often in the long lonely evenings, after they were consigned to sleep, she would walk restlessly up and down the library, weeping over the past, or dreaming of the future. Sometimes she wished to die before Arnold returned; feeling that, though he might not recognize her at once with a casual glance, yet it was impossible they should see one another constantly without her being discovered. Her voice, surely—Oh! surely, he would remember the sound of her voice. And then she thought of the consequences. Would he thrust her from his home, as a punishment for the loving deceit she had practised? She shuddered at the possibility which presented itself. Sometimes a vague hope faintly crossed her heart, that when Sir Arnold, humbled as he was by the desertion of his noble bride, remembered the much-enduring affection which had prompted her to this step, he might—he *might* even marry her. If she had erred, it was for his sake; and ten years had passed, and found her firm and faithful as the wife of his bosom could have been. But all these fears and hopes gave way before the one unreasoning desire of passionate love; to see him, to hear him once more. She would brave all perils—she would run all risks—so that she might stand once more in his presence, known and acknowledged as the love of his youth. Often and often, in the silence of the night, as she gazed round on those familiar walls, she would start up, and, sinking on her knees, while her appealing eyes were raised to heaven, exclaim, in a paroxysm of agony, "Let me—only let me hear him say, '*Jane! my Jane!*' as of old, and I will die contented."

One inmate of Stepney had already recognised Jane: this was the old steward of the Castle, who, for three generations, had served his master's family. Accident convinced him he was right in his conjectures. As he passed the open door of the library one day, he heard the voice of the rector of Stepney reply to some weeping doubt expressed by Mrs. Farrell, "God forbid, Jane, that it should happen so; and God forbid that you should wish it: if Sir Arnold knows you, you must depart *instantly*."

In the answer to his steward's letter informing him of this fact, which appeared to the old man calculated to touch his master's heart, Sir Arnold, without taking any notice of his communication, expressed his intention of returning home immediately. Great were the rejoicings in consequence; and, on the night he was expected, the village bells were rung and bonfires lighted. It was very late when Jane sunk into a heavy sleep, from which she was roused by the most piercing shrieks. "In Heaven's name, what is the matter?" said she, as three or four terrified servant-girls burst into the room. "Oh, the Castle, ma'am, the Castle is on fire—save yourself!" Jane rushed to the children's apartment: it was already in flames: she seized two of the little helpless beings, and, bidding the nurse follow close

with the other, made her way through the suffocating clouds of smoke down stairs. They stood safe in the open air; and for a few seconds, Jane remained, palpitating and breathless, gazing upwards. Columns of red flame ascended from the roof, and burst from the high gothic windows. The moaning, weeping, and screams of terror, from the female servants, were interrupted by the heavy crash, from time to time, of the roof, timbers, and floors, of the different rooms: the left wing of the house, where the library stood, was one sheet of fire. At this moment the rattling of a chaise was heard in the front avenue: it was unheeded by the servants, who were stupefied by fear; but Jane caught the sound. "Oh! God be praised," said she, bursting into tears, "that I can, at least, present you all safe to *him*." She turned to the children: the tears froze beneath her eyelids: one of those children, one of *his* children was missing! With a wild shriek she rushed back towards the flames, in spite of the entreaties of those near her.

Lighted by the glare of his burning home, Sir Arnold sprang from the chaise, and, in an instant, pale as death, he stood in the midst of them. "Are they safe — *are* they safe?" exclaimed he, as he folded those little ones to his bosom. "Safe, all but one," was the answer. "*All but one!*" murmured Sir Arnold, as his swimming eyes strove to ascertain which was lost; and, for one wild instant, a sort of comparison as to which he could best spare, passed through the father's heart. His prim, quiet Agnes — his merry, dark-eyed Arnold, were there; it was the little sickly Gerard who was missing — Gerard — his mother's favourite! — "There! there! there!" shouted the crowd, as Arnold turned, with a groan, to gaze on the pile of flame which had been the home of his fathers. The form of a woman advanced; she was unscathed by the fire; she held his child in her arms. While Sir Arnold darted forward, she made a sudden pause, as if too faint to proceed: a heavy beam fell crashing from the window on the lawn; and, as she laid the child on the grass, it struck on her bosom, and she fell back. Amid the deep and dread silence which succeeded, Sir Arnold advanced to her side: he did not attempt to speak — he *felt* that she was dead. She lay nearly in the position in which he had first beheld her, in the churchyard at Marsden: her hair, no longer confined by the close cap she had worn for some years, fell back in masses from her upturned forehead: the red glow of the fire restored to that pallid face, as if in mockery, the almost supernatural brilliancy which had first charmed him: and the expression of intense fondness still lingered on her features. Sir Arnold stooped, and, with the strength given by agony, raised the ponderous wood from off the heart which had beat for him alone. "Merciful God," groaned he, as he knelt and lifted the corpse in his arms — "Jane! my Jane!"

They were the words she had so ardently wished to hear.

A TALE OF THE DESERT.

BY JOHN CARNE, ESQ.

[From "The Gem," for 1835.]

IN the East, the love of story-telling is not confined to the splendid coffee-houses of Damascus, on the very bosom of its many streams, or to the kiosques on the Bosphorus, where the Turk listlessly reclines, and gazes on the shores of Asia, where the bones of his fathers are laid. In the desert a tale is yet more welcome. Often when the heats of the day are past, and its journeys over, some wanderer will begin a wild narrative. This occurred to us once in the way between Montsalut and Siout, in Upper Egypt: we rested at evening beside a well, the only one in the way: a small brass pitcher, fastened to a chain, hung beside, for the traveller's use, and above was a wooden canopy to screen the water from the burning heat. Near by, was the tomb of a Santon, with its wonted group of sycamore: the more zealous paused here and prayed—we sat in the shadow of the trees; and, while our simple meal was preparing, one of the Arabs told the following tale. Perhaps we fancied it more amusing than it really was; the moment being one when the senses were wholly at fault, and the fancy was compelled to seek a world of its own. The waste of sand spread far in front, in which was no shadow save that of the sycamore beside the tomb: our camels lay down silently, and stretched their long necks on the dry soil. An Italian improvisatore would have shrunk from the scene; but it was the Arab's home, where his fathers had lived and died. His voice was clear, and his gestures graceful, as he began:—

Amidst the hills of Syria there is a small and lonely plain, and many flocks fed on its pastures. A rich man lived there, whom Alla loved to bless; for the flocks were his, and the shepherds were his servants. In the midst of many trees and a spacious garden stood a noble dwelling; this was his also. But flowers and the shade of trees do not make man happy; hath not the Prophet said "What is man without woman? even as the lonely well without the palm-tree; it hath no shelter from the heat and blast." Achmed had a wife of exquisite beauty, who was still young. Unto Almia the love of Achmed was enough: she desired no other blessing. But her husband was dissatisfied: even when her head lay on his bosom, and her face, like that of an angel, was fixed on his, a cloud would gather on his brow, and he would turn sadly from her. Often in the slumbers of the night, broken murmurs fell from his lips, as of one who would not be comforted. This rich man was passionately fond of the chase; he went forth to the mountainous region around, where the eagle, the fox, and the antelope dwell.

Even then, when the plain beneath caught his eye for a moment, he would pause and gaze fixedly on his home. Was it not enough that his lovely wife dwelt there, and watched for his return, as the mother watcheth for her child? "Oh! when," as the Prophet saith, "is the heart of man satisfied, that for ever longeth for what it hath not?" Achmed mourned over the home of his fathers, and said, "A stranger shall possess it: a stranger shall enter its gate, and sit beside the hearth, with his wives and his children, when the name of Achmed shall have passed away like a dream. Alla! why hast thou written me childless?"

This was his first sin: for his murmurings and discontents were heard on high. One evening he returned, wearied in body, but exulting in heart: for he was a proud and boastful hunter. In the desert, beyond the mountains, he had chased all day some of the swiftest antelopes: his arrow had brought down a number of birds, some for their beautiful plumage, others for their rare flavour; while his companions had little success. Almia met him at the gate, by the mountain side, and saw that his heart was glad: he pressed her fondly to his heart, and kissed again and again her crimson lips, and then bade his spoils be spread before her: and she praised his exquisite skill, and said that "in all Syria there was no hunter so mighty," and he believed the words. A stranger would have believed them, as well as Achmed; for the words of Almia were resistless, as she stood in her beauty, and stretched her little hand over the trophies of the day, that lay on the wild grass. The sun was setting on the plain, and its red light fell on her slender form and rich tresses: her raised arm, that was bare to the elbow, was as if it had shared in the slaughter; and a light was in her eye — those who saw it looked fixedly; but Achmed often said afterwards, it was a warning light,

There was joy in his home that night. They feasted, and listened to the sound of music; for the wandering musicians from the hills were there, and the wines of Lebanon were drunk freely; the precept of the Koran was forgotten in the wantonness of the hour. The guests praised the beauty of Almia, and the many excellent qualities of their host; for their eyes sparkled, and their tongues were like the rushing of waters. And there arose one from among them who was famous as a tale-teller, and there was silence in the hall. His welcome from Achmed, who despised his art, had been cool, and a vindictive pleasure was in his eye. He extolled the condition of those who live far from cities, who, amidst their pastures, and flocks, and herds, have no will but their own; but, like Abraham and his sons of old, can call the hills and the valleys their own in the fulness of their hearts. "But what were all these to the patriarch," he said, "while he had no son? they were covered with the blackness of darkness; but, when Isaac was born, every field laughed for joy." Then he praised the unrivalled skill of Achmed in the chase, before which no bird of the air, or beast of the desert, was safe. He dwelt on the proud spoils of the day; pity that such skill could never be transmitted — that no son could inherit it! "O beasts of the forests, and fowls of the air, rejoice ye when Azrael shall summon your destroyer!"

He sat down, and left a serpent in the breast of Achmed, who looked fiercely for a moment on the man, and then mournfully on Almia: a gloom spread over the halls, the lights themselves grew dim to his eye; and he drew his robe over his face to hide the anguish that was gathering there. Still there was silence in the hall, for they saw that his grief was exceedingly great, when he slowly lifted his face to heaven, and said: "Alla! have pity! Grant unto me a son, and take, if thou wilt, all other things away. Even the delights of the chase I will abandon for ever." And the man wept bitterly. But his prayer was heard in heaven, and his vow was registered. Alla, to whom every secret of the heart is known, was willing to prove that of Achmed. The guests departed: all the night he walked to and fro with restless steps; and, when the morning rose, hope came with it to the soul, and a presentiment that its desire would be granted. Ere another year had rolled by, he pressed a son to his bosom. O Prophet of God, the twelve hours thou hast given to each believer in paradise, are not equal in bliss to one child of our bosom! It was beautiful to see the joy of the father. What was the chase to him now? The antelope and the wolf were quiet in their lairs — the eagle looked down in scorn from his eyrie; for the matchless hunter passed all his days by the

side of Almia and his infant: he was never wearied with gazing on them. The boy grew like unto his mother, with much of her loveliness; but the eye and the spirit were those of the father. He seldom went where the shepherds tended their flocks on the plain, or loved, after he had passed his fifth year, to remain long in the harem with the women. He went with his father to the mountains, and his little foot strove to scale their declivities: clasped in the arms of the former, he was borne over the more perilous places. And he, too, loved to scare the eagle from his nest, and look on the gazelle's mournful eye, as it bounded by like the wind. Achmed had taught him to love these things; and, when he saw little Selim's cheek burn, and his heart throb quick at the sight, he knew that his son would be a hunter also. Now it was that his vow was heavy on his soul. Never did the sun rise in its glory on the hills, but he thought even unto agony, of past days. Where they never to come again?—*Never!* It was more than he could bear; for he knew that his vow was registered above, when his prayer was heard in mercy. He kissed his child's brow and lips: "Can I desire any thing beyond this?" he murmured. Then he cast his eyes on the bow and arrow of Selim: a few moments after, the latter drew the arrow to its head, at a bird of the forest, and gave a shrill cry of delight as he saw it fall fluttering at his feet. The father turned miserably away! It was in vain that Almia sought to comfort him: her smiles, her sweetest blandishments, could not bid Achmed smile again. "Alla! Alla!" he would exclaim, "my burden is more than I can bear." Who can fathom the mystery of man's heart?—was he not blessed abundantly?—did not his flocks cover the plain?—such a wife and child also, as Almia and Selim. "O happy Achmed!" said the people of the neighbouring hamlet, as they passed his gate. Within, one desire, one poor desire, devoured his peace night and day, as the moth doth a garment.

This could not last. His will, that struggled with every tie of gratitude and piety—his rebellious will broke loose at last. One day he issued madly from his house, sprang on his favourite horse, and rode, like the winds, into the desert. He revelled all day in the slaughter—his cry came on the breeze louder than ever: his beautiful courser staggered feebly back at night, and fell dead at the gate. Achmed stood beside him, and looked sadly on his favourite: those who were near said that the eye of Heidel, such was the courser's name, was strangely bright and menacing, and was never turned away from his master: that there arose wild sounds in the air, as of great sorrow. Perhaps they were a warning from God! Had Achmed stopped here, his cup might still have been full, even running over! But his passion, so long stifled, was like a furious stream: in its indulgences his heart grew seared, till his solemn vow became at last like a dream of the night. He said that he sought only to train Selim to the chase. Alas! what delusions will men gather round them!

One evening he came home, weary and hungry; yet he refused to taste the wine, and sat thoughtfully at the board. Again and again Almia inquired the cause, and his face was flushed as he told it: that in one of the highest precipices of the mountain Gibel was a bird of the rarest plumage; of the size of the eagle, but of more rapid flight: its cry was like the wild cry of the human voice, when death is near. The most skilful sportsmen of the country had been baffled by the bird: they had taunted Achmed to the trial: he had watched from day to day, till his skill became a mockery; and a bitter smile was on his lip as he told it.

"Harm it not," exclaimed Almia wildly, "Oh! harm not a feather of its wing. Achmed, it is no bird of the mountain, or of the forest. Thrice, when I walked with Selim in the plain, it lighted on a rock beside us, and uttered a cry so unearthly, so full of woe, that my heart sank within

me: then it spread its beautiful wings fondly round Selim's head; and, as it flew slowly away, its cry came awfully back. Achmed, it is the bird of Alla! you dare not slay it."

He remained silent for a while, and then spoke sadly and sternly: baffled pride, jealousy, and impatience, were in his words. If the noble bird of Gibel should be the prey of another, where, then, would be the matchless and unerring aim of Achmed? "Oh Almia, let me see the blood of that bird on my arrow!" and he clenched his hands, and bit his lip fiercely.

"My husband," said the agitated woman, "God gave us Selim. Then you broke your solemn vow: yet he did not punish you. Are not the beasts of the desert and the plain enough to satisfy you, but you must seek the life of that fated bird that dwells alone?"

He was stung to the soul at her words, and then he gave way to wild anger.

Several days passed.—Christian, is it not written in thy holy books, that a king in Israel refused to be at rest, because the little field of a poor man was withheld from him? Was not the Caliph Asrou, of Bagdad, wretched, because he could not turn the waters of the Tigris into his gardens, though they had innumerable fountains?

On the evening of the seventh day, the sun was going down on the mountain Gibel, at whose foot was seen a lonely, and baffled hunter, reclining against the rock, his head resting on his hand. Already the shepherd's cry was heard, as he called his flocks from the hills; and the camel-bell came faintly from afar, as the lonely caravan passed on its way. The hunter heard the sounds; but he did not turn away: his eye was fixed intensely on a noble bird that sailed majestically on high. As his glorious plumage caught the purple light, it seemed, as Almia said, the bird of Alla. "Oh! yet nearer," murmured Achmed, as the big drops burst from his forehead. He had watched here all day; and now his frame trembled, and his heart beat fast, with a burning yet miserable hope. At that moment the bird swept nearer—the arrow was drawn to its very head, and transfixed his breast: the outspread wings sustained it in mid air a few moments: then its proud head sank, its eye of fire was closed, and it fell, at the very feet of the hunter. Achmed looked down upon it with a look of unutterable pleasure, that quickly passed. Still, when he spurned it with his foot, in scorn, and drew his bloody arrow away, there came another cry, a voice from above, from the very summit of the rock—"Woe, woe unto Achmed: the hand of the Highest spared and blessed thee, and thou wouldst not spare!"

He stood still for a while, and listened; but the voice had passed away: then he stooped and grasped the bird; for he knew not what he did, his heart was so stricken. And he went to his home, and retired to his chamber; but sleep went from him: and, in the morning, he turned to Almia, and told her; and she trembled greatly. Then she went secretly, and wept over the bird, as it lay by the fountain side; and no corruption came on it. The friends of Achmed came also with the morn, to praise his matchless skill, and look on the prey of Gibel, that they had often sought so earnestly.

So it was, that in a few days the spirit of Achmed came again, and he went forth to the hills, and his son was by his side; and the father stood on a precipice, and looked down on the plain, the flocks, the dwelling, and the groves, and said, "They shall never pass from me and mine." When the sun was at its height, they were parched with a cruel thirst, and sought on every side for water in vain; and then sought the shadow of the rock for shelter. They sat here some hours, till Selim's lips were parched. His father could hear the beating of his heart, as he turned his beautiful dark eye on the burning heaven, in which was no cloud. "Oh! for the foun-

tain that falls in my mother's chamber," he murmured. Achmed rushed forth in the search again, and climbed the mountain's side—if some little rivulet might not be there. At last, near the summit, he found a solitary pool of the clearest water, in a cleft of the rock, but would not cool even his lips till Selim drank; and he cried aloud on his name, and was answered by a wilder cry from below. He bent over the precipice's edge, and saw the boy flying fast, pursued by a hungry wolf, whose jaws were close to his prey. His hand trembled, and his brain burned: his arrow flew like the wind; in the next moment they were lost from his view by a projecting rock. He bounded from crag to crag, and soon stood beside the spot, and beside his dying son; the wolf had fled unharmed, scared by his shout; and the arrow was in Selim's side. The boy uttered no murmur, no reproach on the hands that slew him; but kissed his father's lips, that were white with horror, and spoke of his dear—dear mother! if he could but see her before he died. And he put his trembling hand to the wound, to stop the blood that flowed so fast; but he could not. "My father, carry me home—carry me softly, and lay me by the fountain's side, in *her* chamber."

A few moments after, a ghastly man was seen descending the mountain: he passed on with the swiftness of an evil spirit—every step was tracked with blood. Oh! how fondly he pressed to his heart the burden he bore, and he cried aloud: whoever heard that cry, shrank from it, and said that the judgments of God were abroad.

There was a red glare that night in the sky—he saw it not: there were fearful sounds of distress in the air—he heard them not: the glare grew fiercer; and, when he broke from the mountain-pass, on his own plain, behold! his dwelling burned. The flames had caught the grove: the flocks, as well as the servants, fled wildly from before it. The chamber of luxury, even the loved one of Almia, to which the thick foliage gave perpetual shade, perished quickly. She gazed at the destruction, and then her thought turned wildly to her dearer trust, Achmed and Selim. Oh! where was the father in this hour? The night had come down, and the hunter's cry was not yet heard. But another sound suddenly rose near; and the living and the slain stood before her, as she stood amidst her handmaids, beside the stream. She took Selim from his father's bosom, pressed his lips to her's and joined her arms fast round his body; but neither spoke nor wept. Achmed, in his agony, knelt beside her: shrieks and lamentations filled the air, louder even than the noise of the flames. But the mother's hand was pressed on the child's heart; for it yet heaved. Her breath was mingled with his own sweet breath, that came fainter and fainter to the close; and down the arrow fell the life-blood on her limbs—they shuddered miserably as it fell. And when he died, there was a deep silence around; for all looked on her agony: even Achmed's moans were hushed. She laid the boy gently on the ground, and looked long on his still and beautiful face, from which she wiped, unconsciously, the stains of blood, and put aside the dark hair, as she was wont to do, when he came weary home; and her words to the lost were fearful to hear, even like the words of one who dreameth fearfully.

At last Almia rose, and turned to her husband, though he still told wildly that he was the slayer. Then it was that the wife triumphed over the mother; for she saw his despair! And the man bowed beneath the power of her tenderness, and rent his garments, and heaped ashes on his head.

When the morning rose they saw that the dwelling, and all their pleasant places, were a heap of ruins: the fountain fell sadly. The rich man's heart was broken, and he cared no longer for these things: he resolved to tarry no longer on the spot;—they both knew that the judgments of Alla were there.

The words of the few friends who gathered round, fell idly on the ear.

They took the body of Selim, wrapped in a white robe: Achmed bore it in his arms; for he refused to part with it. The despairing man moved forward at a slow pace. — “Bird of Gibel,” he murmured at times; “my broken vow — my ruined —” Then he looked wistfully on his wife: her face was pale as the tomb; but it was calm. A few faithful servants were with them: they quitted the rich plain, the scene of so many years’ happiness, and passed the surrounding chain of mountains. They knew not whither they went; for they were like people who fled from the agony of their own heart. Beyond the mountains was the desert, where Achmed had often followed the chase when the sun was setting. O beautiful desert! where in childhood I strayed, and have since roved proud and free; no grove, or city, or stream, is so dear to me as the wilderness of thy bosom!”

Achmed paused for some time, and made a sign to his followers; and they passed to a solitary place of graves, at the foot of a high precipice, so that the sun never fell there; for the Arabs love that their last resting-place shall be in perpetual shade. Fragments of rock, placed upright in the sand, marked the sepulchres of those who had died in the wilderness. When the sun was quite gone down, the father dug a grave; and here they buried their loved one. Is there not a sorrow too deep for words? The child lay in his desert grave, wrapped in his white shrouds, while all stood around and looked on his uncovered face: the beauty of his mother was still on his lips, and cheek, and brow, for death had spared it; his hands were clasped on his bosom. — O God! whose hand shall lay the earth on that breast? — As the night gathered round them, each asked the question of his own heart; and no hand was found to do it. But when darkness fell on the grave, one of the domestics gently covered the body with the sand: — the quick ear of the antelope stealing by could scarcely have caught the sound; but the parents heard it, and shuddered convulsively as it fell.

Many days were passed here: the solitude of the desert was welcome to Achmed; his soul was the dwelling of despair, and remorse fed upon it. He wandered fiercely over the sands; the burning heats of noon fell on his head and parched his skin even to blackness — he felt them not: then he returned, and sat gloomily amidst the tombs. It was more than man could bear. One morn he suddenly commanded the tents to be struck; and Almia saw that the hour of mercy was not yet come. They journeyed farther into the wilderness, where the aspect of nature was more awful; and he loved to go forth to the savage precipices and watch the dying hues of day from rock to rock, and the stars come forth like a mighty and living host, so great was their lustre. Almia was often with him in these hours: it was beautiful to see the fond and pitying woman stand beside her gloomy husband, and soothe his misery.

One day they rested beside a well: it was a lonely one, and around it were a few palm-trees, fed by its moisture: their green leaves and their shadow had an exquisite beauty; for all else there was an eternal heat and thirst; and Oh, stranger! hadst thou heard the soft gushing forth of the well, thou hadst said no music was ever so lovely to thine ear. In this place they rested long. One morn, soon after the break of day, Achmed descried the approach of a caravan from afar — horses, camels, with many riders and an innumerable company of those who walked painfully: he knew it to be the great company of pilgrims on their way to the Holy City. Some hours had elapsed ere they drew near to the well, while he gazed with deep and melancholy interest on the various banners; some covered with gold and silver, or rich embroidery: above all floated the green ensign of the Prophet. They came, unsuspecting of danger. He wished that he also were on his way to Mecca, to atone at the Caaba for

the deed that weighed heavy on his soul. Already the sound of the camel-bells could be heard, and confused, though low, voices of many pilgrims, the looks of the foremost bent intensely on the palm-grove, when a sudden fierce outcry rose from a ravine on the left, and Achmed beheld a band of Arabs rushing from their concealment to plunder the caravan. The guards made but a feeble defence: the pilgrims, rich and poor, hadgé and merchant, were soon thrown into helpless disorder; and the whole multitude moved wildly too and fro, like the waves of the sea. Already the plunderers were amongst them: the sacred ensigns were trampled in the dust; and cries of fear, despair and death, filled the air.

At the sight, Achmed was filled with grief and a daring resolve to aid the worshippers of the Prophet. He sprung on his favourite steed, and, drawing his sabre, hastened to rally the disordered guards, and put himself at their head. At his example many of the merchants defended themselves. Raising the green banner of the Prophet in one hand, he attacked the Arabs with so much fury, that after a short and desperate struggle they turned their horses heads and fled over the desert. Their great Sheikh, who had seized the white camel, the holy offering to the Prophet, was slain by the hand of Achmed. The more pious devotees gathered round him with tears of joy, kissing the folds of the banner, and the feet and mane of the adored animal: the wealthy pilgrims collected their scattered bales together—the dervishes gave way to frantic gesticulations—then all voices blessed their deliverer. He stood amidst them, as one to whom the praises of men were as dust: his hands were clasped on his gloomy brow, and his sad and stern eye fixed on the scene of the battle, as if he would fain prolong its excitement—it was such a blessed relief from despair. Then, as if to shun farther observation, he turned from the multitude, and sought his tent in the grove. The caravan rested at a short distance: its tents covered the face of the desert, on which, as night drew on, innumerable fires were lighted.

It was late, and Achmed sat alone in his tent: a lamp burned beside him, when a step was heard to draw near and the chief Dervish of the caravan, who watched over the holy camel, stood before him. Achmed looked wistfully on his pale and impressive features, that had not yet lost their youthful expression, and at last remembered the man who had once been a guest in his home in the plain, where sickness compelled to ask a refuge.

"Achmed," said he, after a long pause, "I know your history well: you have drunk deep of the waters of misery."—The other waved his hand mutely; for the wild and bright eye of the stranger searched his very soul.—"But the deed thou hast done this day is risen up before Him as sweet incense. The banner, the blessed camel, the great multitude of the faithful, have been rescued from the spoiler: but for thy hand, they had been scattered as the sand of the desert. Achmed, I come as a messenger of mercy!"

"Oh, Selim! Selim!" murmured the father,—

"Is justly taken—even by thine own hand," resumed the Dervish: and the sweet tones of his voice were evidently heartfelt. "You were blessed beyond others; for Almia, in her tenderness and beauty, was as an angel: yet you mourned day and night for children, and accused the Highest. Fool, the Prophet in his paradise hath given woman in her glory to the faithful; but hath he said aught of children? He believed not that happiness, even on earth, hung by such a thread—Mohammed had no child." Achmed replied not, but raised his face to that of the speaker. "Yet Alla," again said the dervish, "had compassion on thy tears, and gave thee a Selim; but thy vow was registered never to draw an arrow again—to forget thy famed skill in the chase. Even this, restless and vain man! was broken: even this poor offering to Heaven was recalled. Still the

bolt had perhaps not fallen, but the bird of Gibel must be thy victim :—the beasts of the desert, the fowls of the air, were before thee ; but your arrow thirsted for that noble bird, and your soul had no rest till it fell.” The shuddering of Achmed’s frame told the truth of these words.

“Spare me,” he said, “spare the desolate.”

The Dervish raised his hand towards the beautiful sky of night, the faint emblem of the glory of Alla. “Achmed, it is the will of God that the agony pass from your soul : despair no longer. The day is fast breaking : it is the hour of prayer.—*Il Allah bismillak !*” His cry went forth distinct and clear over the wilderness, and was answered from every part of the camp : a rushing sound was heard throughout the multitude, and the murmur of their thousand voices was like that of waves on the shore.

Achmed knelt on the sand, and prayed also ; and, as repentance, sorrow, and hope, so long a stranger, rose within, the tide of feelings became too strong : he drew his robe over his face, and burst into a flood of tears. When the sun rose, the hardness had passed away from his heart ; for the love of Alla had entered there—the selfish and gloomy man spoke of blessings ! Almia saw that the face of her husband was no longer the same ; for he met her with a smile of the deepest tenderness : he laid his head on her bosom, and spoke of the future, the bright, the beautiful future that was before him.

The Dervish again entered the grove where the tents of Achmed stood ; and, pointing to the caravan, now in motion, he laid the charge on him to conduct it even to the Holy City, and be its defender from the dangers that might yet be in the way. It was in vain to refuse : the tone of command with which he spoke to the husband, and of entreaty to the wife, at last produced compliance. “In a few months,” said the former—there was even confidence in his words. “I shall return to our desert home.” In another hour the pilgrims were on their way : file after file of camels, as far as the eye could reach, and the countless forms of men, struggling through the painful soil. In the van, at the head of the guards, who yielded to him the post, rode Achmed, his keen eye traversing every part of the desert—all the daring and activity of the hunter transferred to the leader of the hadjés. Every hostile attempt was foiled by his restless vigilance : while others slumbered, he watched ; and the hollow tread of his courser’s feet alone broke on the stillness of night.

At last the minarets of Mecca were seen afar off ; and the weary multitude shouted for joy, for many had perished by the way. Nine times he passed round the Caaba, and kissed, and pressed his throbbing brow on the black stone : he drank of the well of Zemzem, that is said to wash out each dark remembrance ; and each hour of the day he prayed, either beside the tomb of Mohammed or on the submit of Arafat. The haughty expression of his features was changed : his dark and restless eye now beamed with mildness : and when he came forth from the mosque, and the voices of the natives, as well as pilgrims, hailed the saviour of the great caravan, his calm smile told that the demon of this world had abandoned his prey. Was this the man who would have yielded life rather than his glorious skill in the chase, and feared to be childless more than he feared the halls of Eblis ? O Alla ! how great is thy power to change the heart ! Through many waters dost thou bring those whom thou lovest !

One morn, ere sunrise, he was kneeling in the great corridor of the holiest mosque, his face turned to the east, and his hands clasped on his breast : low murmurs, but not of sorrow, broke from his lips. He turned at last, and saw the Dervish standing beside, and gazing on him with un-repressed admiration. His robe and turban were of spotless white, as were his sandals ; for he served in the inner sanctuary. “Thou noble and enduring man,” he said, “God will not brake the bruised reed. Thy services on

the desert were great, and have reached the ears of the Sultan, which are open to the words of thy friend. The messenger is even now on the way to invest thee with the Pachalic of Lebanon, and all the plains at its feet. Remember the bird of Gibel — remember —” A look of indescribable feeling from the father checked his utterance, and the word Selim died on the other's lips: he waved his hand, and passed into the interior of the mosque.

While these things were passing, Almia remained in the palm-grove in the desert. There is nothing so painful to the senses and imagination as to dwell amidst endless sands, on which the heat consumes by day, and the blast by night; and no change ever comes, no spring tide, no bursting forth of flowers, or falling of leaves: even our fellow-creatures, when they come, wear the look of suspicion, and pass on their way quickly. But around the lonely palm-grove the traveller loved to tarry: even the Santon, stern and proud, drank of the well, and lifted up his hands and blessed the wife of Achmed. Her tale was known — her white tents beneath the trees were a sanctuary: even the wandering spoiler paused for a while to gaze on them, and then urged on his wild steed. They gave her the name of “the lady of the desert.” During the day, her attendants sometimes followed the antelope for their subsistence: a few sheep, that browsed on the scanty pasture of the neighbouring hills, afforded milk; and the small caravans of merchants never passed by, on their way to Persia or Bussorah, without offering some of their choicest gifts: for they remembered the deed of Achmed. Each evening, Almia ascended the highest rocks, and remained there till the moon rose, and shed its splendour on the scene, to watch if she could not see afar off the coming of Achmed, or hear, in the vast stillness, the rapid tread of his courser. Then she returned and sat by the fountain's side; and, while she listened to the low gush of the waters, and the shadow of the palms trembled not in the moonlight, and the sandy ocean slept — for no wind passed over it, she thought of their past days of affection; and the beautiful woman wept passionately. Around Selim's birth and Selim's grave, what a tide of feelings rolled wildly! She bent her looks intently over the waste, for wild forms were suddenly there: the glancing of arms in the silver light — the rushing of many horses. It must be Achmed. But the fierce shout of joy came not from his lips; and in a few moments strange faces were around her: and a richly dressed man, dismounting, gently raised her in his arms, and, placing her on a milk-white steed, the bridle of which was held by an Arab, the band departed at a slow pace. Long were her shrieks heard distinctly by her affrighted attendants in the grove. “O my husband, save me!” but there was none to save.

This violent act, so unusual even among the people of the desert, was committed by the chief of a small but wealthy tribe, who had been so inflamed by the sight of Almia, as he chanced to pass by the grove, that he braved the cruel wrath of Achmed, and the curses of the faithful.

Leaving the city of Mecca, with the numerous band of pilgrims, on their return to their distant homes, Achmed proceeded by slow paces, that only added fuel to his impatience. “Home” was the image ever present to his mind: and Oh! what matters it, whether *that* home be the desert tent, the palace in the plain, or the mountain shed, if all we love is there? One being only looked forth and watched for him; but *she* was his world. On the tenth day many people were descried, advancing as if to meet them: they cried, as they drew nigh, “Is Achmed there?” and, as he rode forth, they made obeisance; and a man of rank, who was the messenger of the Sultan, presented the splendid robe and sabre, whose belt was studded with precious stones — the investiture of his new dignity of Pacha. A numerous guard, who had come with the Capidge, circled around him; and the shouts of “Hail, Pacha of Lebanon — hail!” rose to the sky.

Ambition, till now a stranger, sprang up in Achmed's soul; and, as he rode slowly on, and saw that others hung upon his every look or smile, and the wild tones of the war pipe and cymbal awoke, he thought how poor was the hunter's meed — how dim his fame!

Another ten days passed, and he began to draw near his home. He commanded the pace of the caravan to be quickened, till the camels fainted and fell by the way. While they were yet three days distant, he sent messengers on the fleetest dromedaries to bring him tidings, and bade them tarry not by the way.

The third morn had not risen, when they entered a deep dell between the mountains, up whose sides the thin mists were creeping: a horseman was dimly seen rapidly advancing. Achmed reined his steed; for a sad foreboding came over him.

"On the Pacha's head be the blessings of the Highest!" he said; "but I am the bearer of evil tidings. In the palm grove Almia is not! — the spoiler's foot hath been there."

Achmed's face was deadly pale, and his eye was full of horror, as he pressed on with the swiftness of the wind: a few of the guards only could follow him. As the bolt of heaven falls on the desert, so rushed the furious man from the shroud of rocks on the lonely palm-grove; and his servants knelt before him. Her tent was there — the rich Persian carpet on the floor — the turban that covered her beautiful tresses: — but she came not forth; and the vows of vengeance and blood were as empty dreams. Night went down on the host; the wind rose, and swept wildly over it: the white tents of the many thousands were moved like waves in a storm, rolling their crests of foam in beauty: the people feared to slumber, and stood on the sand, or at their tent doors, often looking towards Achmed. It was in this very spot he had saved them from the pursuer: at each moan of the blast, the timid trembled. Within a circle of his glittering guards and officers, stood the Pacha, the pride of sudden power and dignity withering beneath exquisite misery. Was he not as the Prophet, when Ayesha died?

On the morrow, the caravan journeyed. During many days and weeks parties of armed men scoured the desert plains and fastnesses. Achmed offered bribes to the Sheichs, to gain tidings of the lost; but in vain. At last he journeyed onwards to the seat of his Government, to take possession of the palace of Darel Camar, on the heights of Lebanon. In the way there was a burial-place in the sand, that wild and lonely place, where the foot of the stranger seldom came. And here he had buried Selim: the shadow of the precipice was on the rude fragments of the rock, for of such was the child's grave. The father wept there from morn till eve, and then arose to depart. And he wondered to find that the loss of the boy was not equal to the loss of Almia: her sympathy, and time, and the mercy of Alla, had softened the one; but Oh, he felt each day grow darker and more hopeless! Where was her angel smile, her tenderness, the loved pressure of her lips, when he laid his drooping head on her bosom? "Alla! Alla!" he said, "is it not a mockery of power thou hast given me, while she" — and he smote his breast with his clenched hand; and then he knew how great was his folly, how great his sin when he dwelt with Almia in the plain, and was unhappy because they were childless.

At last he dwelt in his palace, and entered on the duties and cares of his office. Sweet are the duties of power, dear are the cares of watching over the fate and commanding the wills of others. Behold! but for the dust and ashes that had newly fallen on his head, the draught had been too intoxicating! The worm that preyed on Achmed's heart, drove him to seek relief, incessantly, in the concerns of his Pachaic. Till noon he sat in the hall of justice; and, when the wretched, the desolate, or the oppressed, came before him, his spirit was melted, his hand hastened to relieve and

protect them. Often he visited the villages and hamlets of his province, and inquired into their wants; and the man became a blessing to his people! Did he forget the palm-grove and the fountain? Did he forget the Caaba and the well Zemzem? or the night of repentance and peace with the Dervish? No, they passed not from his memory; not even when he walked among the cedar-groves of Lebanon, and saw its vine-yards and mosques, and Christian monasteries, on every side; or sat in the marble halls of his palace, and his flatterers said, "Achmed, all these are thine." Beautiful women, also, stood in his presence, to seek redress or favour at his hands, with melting words, and eyes whose dark lustre and love shook the soul. Then he thought of the lost, and the spell was broken.

Is it not said, that adversity draws forth the powers and faculties of the mind, which have hitherto slept? Men wondered at the wisdom and decision of the Pacha's government, and said that these qualities were little discerned in Achmed, the famed hunter of the plain. A few months had scarcely passed, ere he was called to make war on the rebel Pacha of Damascus: with inferior forces, he gave battle on the great plain of Hasbeia, and conquered. The news was accompanied by the head of the rebel prince, laid before the Sultan. A few weeks afterwards, a small but splendid train was seen to approach the palace of the Pacha, and the Capidgé Baski stood before him in the hall, with a fresh mandate, which invested the successful Achmed with the dominions of the rebel prince.

He pressed the decree to his lips and brow, but refused to leave his Pachalic, even for that of Damascus. In Lebanon, he said, he even now watched and prayed, from hour to hour, to find his lost wife again. His emissaries never paused in the search, and he would not go into a distant city. The Capidgé retired, greatly marvelling that a man whom the Prophet had endowed with understanding, should reject a splendid dominion for the sake of a woman.

On that very evening, Achmed sat in the shadow of the cedar-grove, in a pavilion: the breeze came freshly up the mountain: his eye roved over the glorious scene: above, the silent and glittering peaks of snow; far below, the sweep of ocean, on which were the sails of many nations: even the deep murmur of the waves came on his ear, mingled with the softer sounds of the pipe and flute, the music of the hamlets. Achmed thought of his chequered life. The wild tone of a trumpet rose, yet nearer and nearer: Was it a war note? He looked eagerly beneath: a group of people was rapidly ascending, of armed men, surrounding one whom they guarded with devoted care. A few moments more, and Almia rushed into the arms of her husband.

It was long ere a word, save indistinct murmurs, broke from the lips of either, when she pointed to a tall and fine-looking man, who stood amidst the guards, but seemed their chief. In spite of the Arab robe and turban, Achmed quickly recognised the features of the Dervish.

"Achmed," said the latter, coming forward, "thou art weighed in the balance, and not found wanting. Almia is restored to thee safe and unsullied as when she dwelt by the desert fountain. A pilgrim, from his distant tribe, revealed to me at Mecca the spoiler's home; and I knew no rest till the treasure of thy soul was rescued."

A deep emotion spread over his countenance, which he covered with his hands, that trembled like an infant's. To all their protestations and entreaties he made no reply; when he looked up again, his beautiful eye had resumed its wonted serenity. "O Prophet," he said, "I blame thee not that I thirst for a love like this—is it not denied by my vow? No, I rather curse myself; and many penances around thy tomb shall atone for this sin. Achmed, farewell: in *her* thou hast all that man can desire. Thou hast known victory, fame, ambition: behold! they are as dust to the

undying tenderness of a beautiful woman, proved in sorrow, neglect, exile."

As he turned to depart, there was a burning flush on his brow: they could trace his descent for some time by the waving of his white robe, till he joined a small group, whose camels awaited on the plain, over which they rode rapidly away.

For many years the Pacha of Lebanon ruled justly, and no cloud came on his way. Can power, or prosperity, make us forget the days that are past? He remembered the plain, the stream, the grove, where he passed his childhood, where he first loved, and knew no care. He took his resolve, and secretly sent orders to rebuild the dwelling with greater splendour — to lay out the garden and fountains — to gather his scattered flocks around. He was yet in the prime of his life, being forty years of age; and the beauty of Almia, even at the age of thirty, knew no decay. He thought she never looked so lovely. In spite of every remonstrance and entreaty of his friends, he resigned the reins of government, and laid his Pachalic at the feet of the Sultan. The sun had not yet risen on the vineyards or snowy peaks of the mountain, when Achmed quitted his palace with a few faithful attendants, and Almia left her luxurious harem with the hand-maids: by their looks, it was evident they loved each other better than power.

On the third day, as they rode slowly on, they came to the place of graves in the wilderness, the lonely Arab sepulchres where Selem slept. They knelt long beside his rude tomb, but spoke not, and mourned not; for each had learned an indelible lesson of mercy and submission. What a volume of the human heart had Alla laid open to the wife and the husband!

The sun was sinking in exquisite beauty on the plain, as they passed through the gorge of the mountains, and suddenly entered on it. Almia uttered a cry of surprise; for the dwelling of her youth was there — the dear scene of retirement, ere Achmed's affection desired other than herself. A flood of golden light fell on the towers, the cypress grove, and the rushing stream: even the garden looked fairer than ever. She stood a few moments, her beautiful arm extended, as one object after another rose to view, — her veil blown aside by the breeze, — her raven hair falling on the white shoulder, — her lips unclosed, but speechless, while, in her large and resistless eye lived the woman, without whom grandeur was as dust. Achmed gazed on her in rapture. "So did she look," he muttered, "on the night of the banquet, in my hall, when my soul refused to be comforted, because I had no child." He sighed deeply; and, as they slowly passed on to the dwelling, he lifted his eyes to heaven: — "Oh righteous Alla!" he said, "I have drunk of the mingled cup thou hast given me, and have learned to be content!"

NOW OR NEVER.

BY MRS. GORE.

[From "The Forget Me Not," for 1835.]

It afforded a topic for endless discussion to the narrow circle of High Dutch nobility which furnished courtiers and sycophants to a certain northern prince of the empire, (whom, for distinction and discretion sake, we will style Duke of Saxe-Rothenheim,) when his Serene Highness's Master of the Horse thought fit to despatch his only son into the Duchy of Brunswick, for the completion of his education. Instead of following the custom of the country, and retaining Count Emerich within reach of his lady mother the Countess's apron-string at Schloss Edelstein, during the summer months; or, imprisoning him in one of the gloomy apartments of his Teutonic palace at Rothenheim, during the winter, under the nominal tutorage of a household pedagogue; it was Count Edelstein's pleasure to submit his son and heir to the discipline of the humble pastor of the obscure village of Eichwald, a few leagues distant from the city of Brunswick. Nay, instead of recalling him to the court of Rothenheim and the memory of its prince by frequent visits to his family, Emerich was permitted to quit the Presbytery during one month only of the twelve, and that in the autumn season, when Count Edelstein was enjoying his annual relaxation from the duties of his appointment, at a favourite hunting-seat on the banks of the Oder. It was plain that, whatever else the gallant Master of the Horse might intend to make of his son, he entertained no purpose of rendering him a courtier.

Did such an instance of dereliction from the habits of the place occur in the humdrum Duchy of Saxe-Rothenheim at the present moment, the innovator would doubtless incur the suspicious of his caste, as a liberal in politics, or a freethinker in religion. But, during those latter days of the seventeenth century we are describing, a Saxon *Durchlaucht* ran greater risk of being denounced as a Cabalist or Rosicrucian than as an enemy of church or state. Voltaire, Beaumarchais and the Encyclopedists, had not then brandished the flaming sword of irony at the gates of Paradise; and the gossips of Rothenheim, in the utmost vehemence of their strictures upon the proceedings of Count Edelstein, made him accountable for no greater sin than that of inspiring his future representative with principles and prejudices of Anti-Saxon tendency. They had not a word to hint against Eichwald or its ways; but they conceived that the heir of Schloss Edelstein might have picked up a sprinkling of Greek and Latin nearer home. In the remote Presbytery of the Lutheran pastor he could not but become a boor, a votary of Brunswick beer, and pompernickel — *enfin* — "*que diable allait-il faire dans cette galère ?*"

Among the noble personages of the court of Rothenheim by whom this query was in secret most frequently hazarded, was the gentle, undemonstrative, Saxon-haired, Saxon-hearted, mother of Count Emerich. But, if so wedded to the customs of her country as to find matter for dismay in the foreign education of her son, the Countess was also sufficiently endowed with the national virtues of her sex to exhibit implicit obedience to the

will of her husband. It was hard, indeed, to be estranged from the society of her only child. But Edelstein was not a man to be trifled with. The bluntest and most submissive of courtiers, within the sanctuary of his domestic circle he was despotic as a Turk; and the Countess, as she imprinted a fervent kiss upon Emerick's fair forehead on his first departure from home, did not even venture to express her sympathy in his regrets at quitting the familiar scenes of his boyhood. If she redoubled her prayers that the youth might survive to return to her and grow up to manhood an honour to his generation and a blessing to her old age, the earnestness of the gentle lady's aspirations remained a secret between Heaven and a mother's heart.

The young exile, meanwhile, found little enough under the roof of the pastor of Eichwald to obliterate his recollections of the lofty grandeur of Schloss Edelstein, or of the homage and attendance of which its young heir was the chief object. The Presbytery was a rambling, ill-distributed dwelling house, situated on the outskirts of a village so low and so depressed in its construction, that (like the post-wagons, which occasionally traversed its dreary ways, buried up to the nave of their wheels in loose and shifting sand,) it appeared to have sunk into the arid soil. An avenue of silver-stemmed white poplars formed a sort of landmark and approach from the vast corn-fields covering the wide-spreading plain; and, had it not been that, at the distance of a quarter of a league from the house, flourished one of those virgin forests of ancient oaks occasionally to be met with in Northern Germany, not a trace of sylvan beauty or an adjunct to rural enjoyment would have presented itself to soothe the discontent of the young Saxon. Even the common joys of life seemed more scantily distributed at Eichwald than elsewhere.

Old Armfeldt, the appointed tutor, was a cold, reserved man, almost as dry as the sandy soil out of which he might be supposed to have arisen; while his worthy wife, a diligent knitter of lambswool and stower of prunes and pears, fulfilled in these avocations the chief duties of a motherly, matronly Brunswicker, unconscious that the world afforded higher pleasures or heavier obligations. Emerich did not pass four-and-twenty hours under their monotonous roof, without twice as many times protesting against the absurd caprice of his father in condemning him to adopt the homeliness of its habits; nor did even the society of the Fraulein Helena, his tutor's only daughter, hold forth much promise of companionship or recreation. She was in the first place two years older than himself, demure as a nun, and unremittingly employed in thrifty reparations of the household and canonical linen of the Presbytery. Count Emerich soon began to class her with the rest of the old-fashioned furniture of the place, and to treat her with as little ceremony as one of his tutor's high-backed ebony chairs. Nay, when, on his return from his first annual visit to Saxe-Rothenheim, the Countess his mother entrusted him with a massive golden cross to be presented in her name to Helena Armfeldt, in token of gratitude for the kindness of her parents towards their pupil, Emerich was so little interested in the donation as to leave it behind, ensconced among his hunting accoutrements at Edelstein.

All this might be natural enough, so long as the surplice-darning damsel was sixteen years of age, and the Count a headstrong lawless lad of fourteen; but before the expiration of another twelvemonth things had taken a different turn. On Emerich's second visit to the Saxon castle his father took occasion to reproach him in such harsh terms with undue attention to the charms of his tutor's daughter, as well as to interdict under such severe penalties all future intimacy between them, that, upon returning to Eichwald, the idle pupil of Jacob Armfeldt began, for the first time, to busy himself in investigating the merits and attractions of Helena. The forbid-

den fruit already gained a considerable portion of his attention. Nor were his researches infructuous. Emerich soon ascertained that the tresses habitually hidden under her nunlike veil of snowy cambric were bright and glossy as the delicate flax of Magdeburg; and that the eyes, usually down-cast upon her work, could be animated to the utmost vivacity of girlish coquetry. The tight sleeve of her velvet boddice betrayed the outline of a well-shaped arm, terminating in a hand of taper form and dazzling whiteness; nor did the little foot of the fair Brunswicker leave so much as a fairy-print upon the green moss of the old oak forest, over which she rambled merrily on the autumnal mornings, collecting acorns for the little menagerie of squirrels, which afforded the sole diversion of her uneventful life at Eichwald.

But if Emerich felt surprised by these discoveries and eager to turn them to account, the pretty Fraulein seemed fully prepared for such a *dénouement*. Far from receiving with wonder or humility the attentions of which she now became the object, she amused herself with rallying her new adorer upon his protracted blindness and former discourtesies. Every syllable breathed by the Count in illustration of his growing passion was answered by Helena with fits of inextinguishable laughter. Even the Master of His Serene Highness the Prince of Saxe-Rothenheim's Horse, could he have been an unseen spectator of the wooing of his son, would have admitted that the filial rebellion of Emerich threatened no future pollution to the pure blood of the Edelsteins; and that there was little danger of the plebeian name of Armfeldt being conjugally engrafted upon the tree of his flourishing genealogy. None, however, but an ear or eye-witness was likely to yield credence to the fact that the suit of a young nobleman of Count Emerich's prospects in life afforded mere matter of jest to the portionless daughter of a village pastor; and it is not to be wondered at that the old Count, moved by Armfeldt's private representations of the excited state of his pupil's affections, should have suddenly recalled him from Brunswick, and forced upon his acceptance the appointment of page in the establishment of the Duke their master.

And now it was poor Emerich's turn to bestow as tender a regret upon the sandy deserts of Eichwald as ever he had lavished upon the more dignified haunts of Schloss Edelstein. In the ante-chambers of the palace of Rothenheim, amid trophies of arms and hangings of Arras, his thoughts were constantly reverting to the low chamber of worm-eaten wainscot, where Helena sat at her work, with the garden flowers gadding in at the open window, as if to play the spy upon her maidenly industry. Helena's joyous eyes seemed ever glancing upon him; Helena's heartfelt happy accents ever ringing in his ears; those accents which, though simple in their attunement, were pure from all contamination of the rustic dialect. It was enough that, among the bejewelled and beplumed beauties of the court of Rothenheim, none rivalled the native elegance of the pastor's daughter; none boasted a lighter foot, a fairer hand, a more high-bred brow, than the humble little housewife of Eichwald.

And soon this tenderness of retrospection was enhanced by a still holier sympathy. A letter from old Jacob acquainted his pupil and his pupil's father that the helpmeet of his old age had been gathered to her native sands; and although the worthy woman's tenderness towards her daughter had been displayed during her lifetime in a somewhat lukewarm degree, even for the phlegmatic nature of a Brunswicker, there was something so sacred, so scriptural, so patriarchal, in the phrase by which the venerable Jacob announced his loss, and mourned for the Leah of his early servitude, his heart-companion of forty years, that Emerich could not but extend his compassion from the bereaved husband to the motherless child. Besides, however circumscribed in mind or affections, the departed was at least a wo-

man, and of a nature more congenial with Helena's than that of her surviving parent; for poor old Armfeldt might have withered out the remnant of his days amid the dust of the Ptolemies in the Great Pyramid, without any external demonstration of life or liveliness to disquiet the slumber of the surrounding mummies. And what was to become of Helena, consigned to perpetual companionship with such a man! — she, who was so much better fitted to enjoy and adorn the gay festivals of the court of Saxe-Rothenheim — she, whom Emerich would so gladly have aided in transplating to that more congenial sphere!

Scanty, however, was the time allotted him to ponder over these things. His duties in the prince's household, his attendance on the prince's hunting-parties, his participation in the prince's *fêtes*, already formed a fatal interruption to his solitary musings. His father, too, was apt to intrude into the sanctuary of his apartment, and cast a jealous eye of paternal scrutiny upon its arrangements; and often, when poor Emerich had been pouring forth his sentiments in a letter to Helena, or his sorrows in a sonnet to the moon, he was compelled by Count Edelstein's sudden approach to consign both prose and verse to the embers of a huge Silesian stove which adorned his chamber, to secure them from the inquisition of the iron-hearted Master of the Horse. The boy-lover sighed, moaned, and even wept in secret; but all this caution and all this condensation of feeling served only to render more intense the hidden flame within his heart.

Was it calculation, therefore, or miscalculation, on the part of the Count, when, in the course of the first autumn passed with his son in the comparative seclusion of Schloss Edelstein, he contrived, by the intervention of his lady wife, to wring from Emerich the secret of his soul, the mystery of his troth-plight to Helena Armfeldt? — Alas! who can presume to calculate upon the calculations of a courtier of sixty years' experience, an *intrigant* of half a century's dexterity; even though assisted in the operation by intelligence of Edelstein's subsequent concessions, concessions wholly unanticipated by his son! Instead of meeting Emerich's admission of disobedience with threats and menaces, instead of raging or storming at the announcement of such signal rebellion against his authority, the Count simply exacted a promise that, till the following year, (when the pastor's daughter would attain her majority, and the pastor's daughter's lover complete his nineteenth year,) Emerich should hazard no attempt to revisit Eichwald, but address himself to the fulfilment of his duties at court, and to the enjoyment of the gaieties of the city. Not so much as an interdiction was laid upon a correspondence between the young people; nor did a syllable of disparagement fall from the lips of the Count respecting either Helena or her father. With exemplary magnanimity, he at once imputed to his own parental short sightedness the misfortune of Emerich's misplaced attachment.

The grateful heir-apparent of Schloss Edelstein and its honours could do no less than reward its master's forbearance by the most implicit compliance with these conditions. No sooner, therefore, was the family reinstalled for the winter at the Residenz, than it was noticed by the courtiers of the Duke that they had acquired an active and alarming rival in the younger Edelstein. Earliest and latest in the ante-chambers of His Serene Highness, the prince could not form a wish but it was fulfilled by the assiduous and enterprising zeal of his handsome page; and Emerich, who could ride, run, wrestle, shoot at a mark, hunt, hawk, or dance the *lavorla*, with the best of them, was universally admitted to be, like Sir Lancelot of the Lake, "the curtest knight that ever bare shield; and the meekest man and the gentlest, that ever among ladies eate in hall!" Haunted by happy reminiscences, reassured by blissful hopes, he had not a desire unfulfilled. His father and mother had consented to welcome home Helena Armfeldt as their daughter; Helena had at length pledged herself to be-

come their daughter and the wife of his bosom ; wealth, honours, domestic happiness, were before him ; how could he be other than the light-hearted of mortal men ?

Now there is something in the intoxication of joy almost as dangerous in its results as any other species of inebriety. Emerich was, in fact no longer master of himself. Resigned to the domination of a master-passion, he seemed to consider all his proceedings sanctified, all his follies privileged — like the nobles of the chivalrous court of Spain, of the olden time, who, on confessing their enthrallment in amorous bondage, were permitted to wear their hats in presence of their sovereign, on the supposition of being all engrossed by the thought of their liege lady and mistress. A thousand indiscretions, a thousand inconsistencies, betrayed the pre-occupation of Emerich's mind. Even in His Serene Highness's presence, he was often heard to break forth into wild hilarity of speech and gesture, wholly unbecoming the time and place ; on one occasion, he was said to have addressed the grave High Chancellor of the Duchy as his " best and fairest Helena ; " nay — there were persons at court malicious enough to insinuate that the young Count had been even known to lavish the same familiar terms of endearment upon a certain Countess Waldenfeld, the loveliest lady of Saxe-Rothenheim.

Yet every thing prospered with him. The more uncourtly his demeanour, the greater his favour at court. The Duke, weary perhaps, of the sycophantic and monotonous humility of his household, seemed to take delight in the aberrations of his favourite page, and would tap him on the shoulder, or pull him facetiously by the ear, in guerdon of his manifold infractions of the laws of Saxon etiquette. Why, even the High Chancellor himself, with his grizzled beard and furrowed forehead, would willingly have played the buffoon, to be pulled familiarly by the ear by His Serene Highness the Duke of Saxe-Rothenheim ! — and, as to Countess Waldenfeld, who had, perhaps, most reason to wax indignant at the antics of the bewildered page — she could do nothing but laugh whenever his indiscretions were pointed out to her reprobation.

The young Countess might possibly be aware that frowns appeared to sit uneasily upon her lovely countenance ; for, even during the mourning year of her widowhood, (a period from which she had just emerged on Emerich's arrival from Eichwald,) she had been taxed with displaying a less gloomy frame of feature than is held to be accordant with the sable hood and wimple. It is true the lord she had lost was somewhat of the oldest and ugliest to have boasted the possession of so fair a bride. But then his age and ugliness had rendered her an object of general commiseration at the court of Rothenheim. Even his Serene Highness the Duke had not withheld his sympathy from the miseries of her social position ; and, of the whole court, Emerich von Edelstein was alone ignorant of the extent to which His Highness's sympathy was supposed to have been carried. He had in fact been busy squirrel-snaring for Helena Armfeldt among the oaks of Eichwald, during the period of Countess Waldenfeld's afflictions and of the consolation administered by her sovereign prince.

The lady was still but in her five-and-twentieth year ; tall, beautiful, graceful, accomplished ; a delicate musician, mistress of several languages, dancing like a woodnymph, and singing with the fascination of the Rhenish *Lureley* ; and it was but natural that, when a creature thus bright and thus gifted condescended to bend her smiles upon a mere page of the household, the page should requite her graciousness with his unbounded gratitude. Countess Waldenfeld soon became the confidante of Emerich's tender passion, of his happy prospects ; and, if any thing could exceed the lady's admiration of his *naïveté*, it was her wonderment at the disinterestedness of the noble Master of the Horse, whom her experience had hitherto

pointed out as the basest and most venal of courtiers. She espied a mystery in the business, (a mystery which is so piquant a thing to a satiated woman of the world,) and, in addition to the pleasure hitherto afforded her by Emerich's frank and graceful homage, she now began to court his society for mischief's sake, for the sake of fathoming old Edelstein's designs and discomfiting his manœuvres. No pains, no arts, were spared to allure the fascinated boy to her house. He was her constant partner in the dance, her frequent cavalier in the princely hawking parties. Scarcely a day passed without their meeting. But, when she did not see him, she wrote to him; and her perfumed billets again and again assured the captivated page that, when she was not writing to him, she thought and dreamt of him alone. To be written to and dreamed of by so beautiful and accomplished a being as Countess Waldenfeld was certainly enough to turn a head of nineteen, already somewhat wanting in equipoise.

His gentle mother was the first to discern his infatuation. "Beware of that woman," she had whispered one day, while bestowing her benediction upon him previously to his departure with one of the grand hunting-trains of the prince. "Beware of her, for her heart is hollow, and her friendship will lead to evil." But how to beware of an enchantress of five-and-twenty, with a skin as smooth as alabaster, tresses of the hue and glossiness of the raven's feather, and a smile that might have created a soul under the iron ribs of old Jacob Armfeldt of Eichwald!

Countess Edelstein even judged it necessary to extend the expression of her surmises and apprehensions to her husband: and, during the absence of the page and the court on the aforesaid *partie de chasse* (from which the Master of the Horse was surprised to find himself for the first time excluded) she set forth her maternal anxieties in terms so touching and convincing that, on his return home, Emerich encountered his father pacing his own particular chamber, in the most wrathful excitement of mind and body. But the time for warning was over: and, had not the Count been absorbed by the fervour of his fury, he would at once have discerned an accusing consciousness in the young man's countenance—a certain recklessness indicative of mingled triumph and remorse, calculated to apprise him that his expostulations came too late.

The explanation between the son and father was intemperate on both sides, and mutually painful. Emerich had to learn that he had been betrayed into infidelity towards his plighted wife, by the arts of the neglected mistress of the prince; and Edelstein, in the vehemence of his rage, was tempted into the admission of twice as much as he had intended to disclose; raving against the folly, the idiotism, the madness, of his son's infatuation, as if upon the accomplishment of his union with Helena Armfeldt depended all the advancement of his fortunes, as well as all the happiness of his life. But, although these insinuations were incomprehensible to Emerich, the accompanying injunctions laid upon him were intelligible enough: that he was instantly to quit Rothenheim, repair to Eichwald, and accelerate by every means in his power the period of his marriage with the pastor's daughter.

To fly from the presence of the woman of whose unworthiness his exasperated father had afforded him incontrovertible proofs, and who was now the object of his contempt, was an easy task. But, Helena!—to approach the pure presence of the unsuspecting Helena, contaminated by the recent endearments of a wanton!—his soul rebelled against such sacrilege; more especially while his father laboured to impress upon his mind that to complete his engagements with the object of his early attachment was to appropriate to himself a mysterious but overflowing source of worldly prosperity. He did not, indeed, as yet apprehend that the Count's former interdictions had been designed to stimulate his boyish obstinacy into oppo-

sition; it was enough for him to learn with amazement that, but for the remote chance of his alliance with Helena Armfeldt, he had never beheld the white walls or the Presbytery of Eichwald.

If any thing, meanwhile, could augment the conscience-stricken penitence of the faithless one, it was the frank cordiality with which he was welcomed back by his affianced bride. There was an alteration, indeed, in her demeanour towards him. During his absence, all her former spirit of coquetry and scorn seemed to have forsaken her; she was gentleness and humility itself: and, even when he sat in her presence, embarrassed and abashed, studying for words in which, in spite of his father's prohibition, to embody the confession of his faults, she appeared to discern no cause for mirth in the awkwardness of her trembling lover. She was surprised to see the courtly page grown so timid, so reserved; but, instead of seeking to add to his embarrassment, Helena took up one of her interminable specimens of housewifery, and waited patiently an explanation of his unlooked-for return.

"Emerich!" said she, looking up from her work, and bending her sunny eyes inquiringly upon his face, when she found that his difficulty in addressing her increased rather than diminished — "something disastrous has surely befallen you; for it is not thus we should meet, after what has chanced since we parted. You cannot fear to bestow your confidence upon your old playmate, your old friend? — Speak, dearest, forget all other ties that may have been projected between us: look upon me only as the most attached and indulgent of sisters. Speak, Emerich, and set my heart at rest!"

And, thus encouraged, Emerich *did* speak; but not alas! to "set the maiden's heart at rest." He spoke to acquaint her that, although his father was all eagerness for the immediate solemnization of their nuptials, it was now his turn to sue for delay. "I know myself to be doubly unworthy of the happiness in store for me," he exclaimed; "nor will I pretend to your hand till I have earned the gift by the expiation of many a repentant month, affording renewed proofs of devotedness and love. My father has urged me to deceive you; to accept your confiding trust in my honour. But, this must not be, Helena! — Even at the risk of forfeiting your precious tenderness, NOW OR NEVER will I avow the miserable truth, that absence, which has diminished nothing of my admiration, has betrayed me into the vilest of shames. Yes! dearest — I have loved another. Another hand has been pressed in mine; other smiles have constituted my happiness; other —"

"Not another word!" cried Helena, shuddering and turning deadly pale. "I, who have sacrificed so much for your sake, who *would* have sacrificed my very heart's peace, my very life-blood — I have not courage to listen to the confession of this black ingratitude!"

"I have deserved my sentence!" faltered Emerich.

"And such then, is the stability of human affections!" cried Helena, wringing her hands, and apparently unconscious of his presence. "And his father, too, the scion of a feudal line, a magnate of the empire, a noble of Saxony — his father, to whom was known the secret of my birth, of my claims — to have prompted him to deceit, and fraud, for the furtherance of his own base projects!"

"You wrong him, Helena," cried the page. "Revile me as you will, for I, indeed, am an offender. But how, I beseech you, are the *interests* of Count Edelstein to be advanced by the union of his heir with the daughter of a village pastor?"

"You, at least, thank Heaven! are innocent of participation in his schemes!" exclaimed Helena Armfeldt, with bitterness. "You know not that illustrious blood is flowing in my veins; you know me not as the daughter of a sovereign prince. You know not that a few short months will

endow me with claims upon the reigning Duke of Brunswick, such as might tempt even the ambition of a noble of Saxony ; — nay ! — that the laws of the Duchy, as a fief of the Empire, alone exclude me from the throne !”

“As Heaven hears and judges me,” cried Emerich, “this is my first indication of these mysteries ; nor am I yet assured but that you are practising on my credulity !”

“Your father, (long years ago representative of Saxe-Rothenheim at the court of Brunswick,) resumed Helena, “was the only depositary of young Duke William’s secret, when, during the lifetime of his father, he gave his hand clandestinely to the daughter of Count Rechberg. Time, they trusted, would afford some auspicious occasion for the disclosure of this rash marriage. But, within a few short months, my father fell upon the field of Lutzen ; my mother survived but till my ill-starred birth : when Edelstein, sole confidant of the event, removed me hither to be reared in humbleness and obscurity, as the avowed offspring of the pastor of Eichwald. Even Armfeldt and his wife were kept in ignorance of my real condition, and attributed my origin to him who, for his own sordid views, had hired their protection for my infancy. Nor was it till the death of my foster-mother that I became accidentally placed in possession of a sealed packet, the bequest of my dying mother, acquainting me with the secret of my origin.”

Helena paused for breath ; while Emerich, humiliated by the consciousness of having been rendered the instrument of his father’s machinations, drew towards the open window to conceal his emotions.

“And what was my first impulse on the discovery ?” pursued his companion. “Joy, Emerich ! — joy ! — at the discovery that I was in truth the equal of one who had generously stooped to my supposed indigence ; joy, in the belief that I was about to augment his dignities and confirm his future fortune ! But, soon, alas ! reflection convinced me that, once acknowledged as a princess of the house of Brunswick, my hand would be destined to some prince of the empire, and my heart severed from its early affections. Emerich, I did not hesitate. — Having forwarded to the investigation of the Duke, my kinsman, those proofs of my legitimacy which endowed me with unanswerable claims upon his protection, I at once abjured my rights, my title, my inheritance ; proclaiming myself, with delight and pride, the affianced and contented wife of Count Emerich of Edelstein !”

“Helena,” involuntarily exclaimed the page —

“Tell this to your father !” she continued, gasping with emotion. “Tell it him as a sufficient consolation for the intelligence that his projects have crumbled into dust ; that the orphan of William of Brunswick rejects the alliance of his son ; that Helena Armfeldt is about to seek, where worldly ambitions prevail not, a compensation for her blighted affections, a solace for her wounded spirit. Return therefore, to Saxe-Rothenheim — return to her for whom you forsook me ; the same roof must shelter us no longer !”

Vain were the attestations, vain the intreaties, of the young Count ; who, by the princess of Brunswick’s noble relinquishment of her rights, felt himself released from all suspicion of interested motives in the renewal of his suit. His mere presence appeared to be a source of torture to one, who, reared in seclusion and pure from the contamination of the world, had risked her hopes of happiness upon his fidelity, and, “having forfeited all by the wreck of that frail bark,” was now utterly heartbroken. The only remission he could obtain of his sentence of exile was Helena’s reluctant consent that, at the expiration of six months, he should return to Eichwald, once more to plead his cause, and ascertain what miracle solitude and abandonment might have wrought in his favour. And, on his arrival at Saxe-Rothenheim, the discomfited Master of the Horse did not fail to anticipate wonders from the result of this apparently slight concession.

“Courage, my son !” whispered his compassionate mother, after listening

to the first ebullitions of poor Emerich's despondency ; " it is not in the heart of woman to be thus bitterly estranged by a first offence."

" Courage, my boy !" rejoined his father ; " Helena of Brunswick will yet be yours ; and, once wedded as your wife, trust to *my* efforts to secure the re-establishment of her birthright."

But the regret of Emerich dwelt neither upon Helena of Brunswick, nor upon her birthright. The object of his love was Helena Armfeldt, the poor, the noble, the high-souled, the tender and true companion of his unsullied years. It was no princess of the empire, but the pastor's daughter, at whose feet he hastened to throw himself, at the expiration of his period of banishment.

But, when he arrived at Eichwald, his old tutor was alone, wifeless, childless, comfortless ; and all that remained of the betrothed of Emerich of Edelstein was a white tablet standing ghastly and alone in a secluded nook of the sandy grave-yard of the Presbytery, inscribed with the humble name of " HELENA !" A single shaft from the overflowing quiver of human afflictions had released the true-hearted village maiden from a world of probation.

THE BRAZILIAN BRIDE.

BY THE HON. MRS. ERSKINE NORTON.

[From "*The Friendship's Offering*," for 1835.]

Among the nobles who suffered most from the invasion of Portugal, and who followed John VI. across the Atlantic, in search of a safer home in another hemisphere, was the Marquess de Gonsalva. He had married a young and lovely woman to whom he was tenderly attached. She suffered much at the separation from her home and family, and her health failed under the fatigue and privation of the voyage : she had scarcely reached Brazil, ere she died in giving birth to a son.

The Marquess remained a widower, devoting himself to the care of his child, and the reparation of his ruined fortune.

Alonzo was a fine generous-spirited boy, grateful and affectionate in his disposition, and very handsome in his person ; his clear dark complexion, laughing eyes, and white teeth, were united to a form remarkable for its just proportions and natural grace. It was on the subject of his education that his father felt most severely the change of his circumstances ; he could not afford to send him to Europe, but all the scanty means that Rio de Janerio supplied, were put in requisition, and in every respect made the most of.

" What a pity it is," thought the good Marquess, " that my boy, who is beyond all doubt the finest and most talented boy in the country, should lose any advantage that *money* could procure. Money, money, where are you to be had !" cried the father, impatiently pacing the room : he suddenly stopped, and appeared for a full half hour wrapped in thought ; then, starting from his reverie, ordered his horse, rode in great haste to the convent of—, had a long conference with his sister the Abbess, returned home, declined an invitation to a ball, and wrote letters the remainder of the evening.

A large and important looking packet was addressed to a Portuguese

merchant, well known as a man of great wealth, at St. Paul's. About the time an answer might be expected, the Marquess became anxious and impatient; it arrived at length; Alonzo took it to his father, who shut himself up in his room to read it.

Presently, Alonzo was called: "My boy," said the Marquess, rubbing his hands in great glee; "how would you like to be married?" Alonzo was just turned seventeen, and therefore answered without a moment's hesitation, "Very much indeed, sir!"—and as he spoke, the bright eyes of Donna Clara, the little peeping foot of Donna Julia, and the separate perfections of half a dozen other Donnas, glanced in delightful confusion across his mind. "Then married you shall be," replied his father; "sit down, my son, I have an important communication to make. I need not inform you that we have lost almost the whole of our property, with but very little hope of regaining it;—in fact we are very poor. I wish you to go to Europe, and for the next few years to have every advantage that travel, study, and an introduction to the first society can give: I wish you, in short, to take your station in the world,—that station for which your birth and talents so eminently fit you: but this wish cannot be accomplished without money; and money, as we are situated, cannot be procured, except by—marriage."—A pause:—the blood receded from the cheek of Alonzo, but bowing his head, he replied, "I understand you, sir." The Marquess proceeded: "Senhor Josef Mendez owes his rise of life to my father, and much also to me; he is, as you well know, considered the richest individual in Brazil: he has only one child, a daughter, the sole inheritor of his wealth. I have proposed a marriage between you and her, frankly offering the fair barter of rank on one side for wealth on the other. I believed it to be the secret wish of his heart that his daughter should be ennobled by marriage; gratitude unites with pride, and he has accepted my offer with the utmost eagerness. It is arranged that we instantly proceed to St. Paul's, where the ceremony will take place: from thence you start for England. My worthy friend, Mr. Mordaunt, will meet you at Falmouth. I write to him by this next packet, offering him so handsome an income, that I have no doubt whatever he will become your tutor, guide, and companion, during your five years of travel and study. At the expiration of that time, you will return to your home and friends,—your bride, and father. I pray only that I may not be snatched away before that happy moment arrives;—I shall then die in peace!" The father and son embraced with emotion. "But,"—said Alonzo, hesitatingly; "but,—the lady, sir?"—"True,—the lady," replied the Marquess; "why,—your lady is but a child at present,—she has not yet completed her thirteenth year, and I regret to say (the Marquess tried to look grave,) her health is considered delicate: however in all that personally regards her, I confess I am rather deficient in information."

Preparations were speedily made for their departure. Alonzo, who was an universal favourite, took leave of all his young friends with a heavy heart they merely knew he was going to St. Paul's and from thence to Europe his intended marriage was a secret.

His last visit was to his aunt, the Abbess. "May the saints protect you, son of my brother!" cried the good lady; "Alonzo, thou art the last support and representative of our ancient and noble house;—blessed be the chance that brings it back to wealth and independence! But remember, Alonzo, thou takest upon thee a duty most delicate and most difficult towards the hand that bestows these blessings. There is no good in this world without its attendant evil:—may thy golden chains lie lightly on thee!"

They embarked, and in a few days reached St. Paul's. They were met on board by Senhor Josef, a little elderly man, shrewd and active,—with a

long queue, cocked hat, brown dress-coat, and a flowered waistcoat. His joy and pride were almost too great for words, and for once in his life natural feeling swept away his whole routine of compliment; which is saying a great deal for an old Portuguese.

The house of Senhor Josef was situated in the centre of the town, and was not at all distinguished from its neighbours, either in its outside or inside appearance; comfort had made less progress here than even at Rio. A heavy, dull looking building, with large white-washed rooms, a few of them only matted; rows of old-fashioned chairs ranged round the wall, or projecting in two stiff rows from the ends of a venerable looking sofa; a couple of small tables, to match, looked at each other from exactly opposite sides, and were ornamented with artificial flowers somewhat faded, in vases; a French clock in a glass case, old massive silver candlesticks, with candles ready to light, decorated with wreaths of white cut paper; — such was the appearance of the grand *sala* of the wealthiest man in Brazil.

They were met at the entrance by a little, dark, fat, good-humoured Senhora, arrayed in stiff flowered satin, whom Senhor Josef introduced as his sister Theresa. She gave Alonzo a hearty smack on each cheek, and led him into the *sala*, where presently a small table was brought in by two neatly dressed black damsels, covered with cakes and very fine fruit. While Alonzo was paying his compliments to these delicacies, the two fathers were talking apart: "The ship sails to-morrow," said the Marquess: "it is very soon," and he sighed; "but, as you observe, we had better not lose the opportunity."

"Much better not," replied Senhor Josef: "every thing is arranged: licence from the bishop, the priest, and the witnesses; all can be completed in an hour from this time."

"And your daughter?"

"Why, my lord, you know Isabella is but a child, and a sickly child; she has been sadly spoiled and petted, and, in consequence of her ill health and my numerous avocations, her education has been somewhat neglected: however, we must begin to make up for lost time."

"Well, Senhor," said the Marquess, with a sort of effort, "the sooner the business is finished the better." Senhor Josef whispered to his sister, and they both left the room. The Marquess then informed Alonzo that the ceremony would take place instantly, and that to-morrow he would leave for Europe. The Marquess also thought it prudent to prepare his son for the appearance of his bride, and after having repeated what her father had stated, he continued: "Promise me, Alonzo, to conceal as much as possible any unfavourable emotion she may excite: remember we have set our fate upon this cast!"

"We have indeed, sir!" said Alonzo, gravely; "but the sacrifice is great." By this expression, Alonzo did not mean that he or his rank was sacrificed, although his more worldly father put this interpretation on his words; no, — the natural integrity, and yet unsullied freshness of his youthful feelings, told him that he was selling his honour and independence, and what youth prizes so much in perspective, free choice in his wedded love.

They retired to their separate half-furnished bedrooms to make some alteration in their dress; which was scarcely completed when a request arrived that they would meet Senhor Josef in his private room. Thither they went, and found him with a notary, a priest, and two witnesses. A deed was handed over to the Marquess to read, by which a very handsome settlement was made on his son; the Marquess expressed his gratitude, and Alonzo kissed the hand of his new father; the deed was signed and sealed, and copies put in their possession. Senhor Josef's will was next read, in which, after providing for his sister, and bequeathing to her

the only house he had, (their present residence,) the rest of his immense fortune he settled exclusively on his daughter. He also expressed his intention to make all fixed and sure by winding up his mercantile concerns before the return of Alonzo: but no land would he purchase; he was aware that a large hereditary estate in Portugal belonged by right to the Marquess, which in all probability he would possess in peace before he died.

These interesting arrangements being completed, the party were requested to proceed to the oratory, where the marriage ceremony was to take place.

Both the father and the son felt sad misgivings on the subject of the bride herself, and it was with a throbbing heart that Alonzo, especially, approached the oratory: his father, yet apprehensive of the final events, whispered emphatically, "Senhor Josef has performed his part nobly: — oh, my son! for *my* sake struggle to support yours." Alonzo pressed his father's hand, but his heart was too full to answer.

Although the day shone brightly through the arched and small-paned windows of the oratory, it was, as usual in catholic chapels on occasions of ceremony, lighted with a great number of huge wax candles, which produced a most disagreeable effect. Two rows of slaves, male and female, were drawn up on each side; the priest and witnesses took their stations, as did Alonzo and the Marquess. Senhor Josef had gone for his sister and daughter.

A few painful minutes elapsed. At length a scuffle was heard in the passage, and "*Non quero! non quero!*" was shrieked out by a weak but shrill female voice. A moment afterwards Senhor Josef appeared with his sister, actually dragging in a thin, dark, lanky form, that was making all the opposition it was capable of, by biting, scratching, and screaming. The father and aunt were assisted by four young mulatto females, whose disordered white dresses, and flowers falling from their heads, showed but too clearly in what desperate service they had been engaged. The girl herself was dressed in thickly-worked Indian muslin, trimmed with rich lace, but which according to the Portuguese taste, was nearly as yellow as her own complexion: in her ears and round her neck were clumsily set diamonds of great value; her hair they had attempted to dress in vain, and it fell over her shoulders, long, strait, and black. Anger and mortification were deeply impressed on the countenances of her father and aunt; and all present looked dismayed. — But poor Alonzo! his blood ran cold: he actually sickened — and nothing but the imploring look of his father prevented him rushing from the oratory. When fairly placed in the centre of the circle, the girl shook herself free, and threw back her disordered hair: she was panting with rage and exertion evidently beyond her strength; she glanced first on the Marquess, and then turned her eyes steadily on Alonzo. Every one was wondering what would happen next; when to their surprise and relief, after a long and childish stare, she stepped up quietly and placed herself beside him. The priest, who knew her well, lost not the favourable moment, and instantly commenced the service. She went through it with perfect composure, every now and then turning round to look at her companion. Once did Alonzo raise his eyes to meet hers, — but *his* fell, as if avoiding the gaze of a basilisk: he visibly shrunk as he touched her cold and skinny hand — in short he could not conceal the agony he suffered. Nevertheless, the ceremony came to its conclusion, and with a sort of convulsive effort he turned to salute his bride. But she had already reached the door, (no one thought proper to prevent her;) — there she stopped, and once again fixed her very large, black, and fearfully brilliant eyes upon Alonzo: their expression was changed, it was no longer the same as at the altar; but what that expression was, Alonzo, though haunted by it for years after, could never make out.

The party left the oratory. The Marquess was the first to recover his composure, and conversed freely on indifferent topics until dinner was announced. Senhora Theresa made an apology for her neice, who, she said, was too unwell to join them. They sat down to a repast more abundant than elegant; and the gloom quickly disappeared from every countenance but one.

In the evening, the fathers had a long conference over their coffee; and Alonzo, availing himself of the excuse his intended early embarkation provided, retired for the night to his chamber.

After a light and hurried breakfast on the following morning, he prepared to depart. The Senhora expressed her deep regret that Isabella was not sufficiently recovered, after the agitating scene of the preceding day, to take leave of him personally; but—and the good Senhora was proceeding with a string of apologies, when Alonzo impatiently interrupted her by placing in her hand a morocco case containing a set of pink topaz of the latest London fashion, which he had brought from Rio as a present for his bride. He mumbled something about the Senhora presenting it in his name, as it appeared he could not have the honour of offering it himself. Away went the aunt with her prize, and returned in a few minutes with a ring containing one deep-yellow diamond of value enough to purchase a dozen of his pink topaz sets, and this was given with many fine speeches from his bride, made up by the Senhora with the felicity of her sex on such occasions.

After receiving the blessing of his new relatives, he went on board, accompanied by the Marquess, who took leave of him with the greatest affection; giving him of course much wise counsel, mixed with the heartiest congratulations on his good fortune: but not one word was breathed by either concerning her who was at once the maker and marrer of all,—the rivet to those golden links, without which, indeed, they would have lain lightly enough. The Marquess was a man of much tact; he felt that any thing he could say on this delicate subject *must* be wrong.

A few weeks brought Alonzo to Falmouth, where he was met by Mr. Mordaunt, his tutor. They proceeded together to the Continent, where it was arranged they should spend three years in travel and study; the two remaining years were to be devoted entirely to England.

Mr. Mordaunt was admirably calculated for the office assigned to him, and soon became affectionately attached to his pupil.

Three delightful years flew rapidly by. The most interesting spots in France, Germany, and sacred Italy were visited. The study of the best authors in each language; that of the history, government, manufactures, and works of art, of each country; together with the acquaintance of the most eminent men—all contributed to exalt and enrich the highly gifted mind of Alonzo, and to fill his heart with the noblest sentiments of benevolence and patriotism. During this time he might have been pronounced among the happiest of mortals,—but in his overflowing cup one black and bitter drop was mingled.

Mr. Mordaunt had been made aware of Alonzo's marriage, and of all the circumstances attending it, by the Marquess. In the first letter Alonzo received from his aunt the Abbess, were these words: "The only chance you have of domestic *peace*, (happiness is perhaps out of the question,) in your peculiar circumstances, is to *guard your heart* with the most vigilant care: if once that treasure pass into the possession of another, guilt and misery will attend you through life. I repeat to you again and again, *guard your heart!*" This letter was handed to his tutor, who, pointing to the last sentence, said emphatically, "let that be your watchword."

During his residence on the Continent, his time and attention were too much occupied, his change of residence too frequent, to allow of his affec-

tions being at any time in danger. And, beside the observing eye of Mr. Mordaunt, and the watchword of the reverend Abbess, it must be noticed that the young Don was not of that lightly inflammable nature, which the sparkle of an eye, the smile of a rosy lip, or the touch of a delicate hand, could ignite in an instant. But Mr. Mordaunt perfectly agreed with the Abbess in opinion that if ever he *loved*, it would be deeply, passionately, and therefore to him — fatally.

At the appointed time they arrived in England: and a year and a half had been passed, with the highest advantage and improvement, in travelling through that extraordinary country, and in visiting Scotland. The last six months they were to spend in London: and, alas! the dreadful evil, from a quarter so little suspected that even Mr. Mordaunt appeared to be thrown off his guard, approached; and the God of love was, as a poet would say, amply avenged for the sacrilege that had been perpetrated in profaning the sacred band of Hymen.

Alonzo was at the opera with his friend the Brazilian *Chargé d'Affaires*. He thought, as he looked round, that he had never been in any public place of amusement where the *sex* showed to so much advantage as at the English Opera; the absence of crowd, the light not too glaring, the superb dresses, contributed, he supposed, to produce this effect. He observed the *Chargé* attentively viewing through his glass some person in an opposite box, and he fancied many other glasses were pointed in the same direction: he looked also, and his eye immediately rested on one of the most beautiful young women he thought he had ever seen: there was that peculiar *something*, however, in her complexion, style, and dress, which marked her as a foreigner. "Who is that?" said he to the *Chargé*; "she looks French or Spanish."

"Neither," said the *Chargé*, exultingly; "she is one of us—Brazilian!"

"Indeed!" exclaimed Alonzo, in an accent of surprise and pleasure.

"Have you not heard of her?" asked his friend: "she is called *the beautiful Brazilian*, and is the novelty of the season, making sad havoc in the hearts of her English admirers. She has come out under the auspices of the Countess of Godolphin, the lady next her."

"What is her name?"

"Donna Viola de Montezuma."

"The name is noble," observed Alonzo, "but I do not recollect it at Rio."

"Her family is settled in the north of Brazil: she herself, however, has just come from Rio, with her duenna and suite, to finish her education. She is an heiress, and is reported to be *engaged* in Portugal. Would you like to go round? I will introduce you."

"If you please:"—and away they went.

The *Chargé* first introduced Alonzo to the Countess, and then presented him as a fellow-countryman to the beautiful Brazilian. She received him with the most marked pleasure, and made a seat for him beside her.

"I am indeed most happy to become acquainted with you, Don Alonzo," said she, "if it were only to express to you the affection I feel for your dear aunt the Abbess, in whose convent I have been some time a resident, and from whom I have received all the care and love of a mother—indeed, I owe her *very* much."

"Her love and care at least seem to have been well bestowed," replied Alonzo: "did you also know my father?"

"Intimately;—and I may also venture to say that I know *you*, so much have I heard of you from the Marquess and your aunt: I am sure no son or nephew was ever more beloved."

Alonzo sighed as he recollected that neither of them had mentioned this lady in their letters: the reason was obvious, — and he felt a pang more

acute than usual when he looked on her lovely and intelligent countenance, — glanced over a figure that appeared to him perfection, and listened to her lively and natural remarks — then compared her with that one of whom he could scarcely endure in any way to think.

The next morning, he mentioned to Mr. Mordaunt, as carelessly as he could, his introduction of the preceding evening.

"I have heard of that lady," observed Mr. Mordaunt. "She is a good specimen of your country-women, — does great credit to Brazil, and would make, I dare say, an excellent English marriage, if she were not already engaged."

"She is really then engaged?" inquired Alonzo.

"Decidedly — to a Portuguese nobleman: this has been published as much as possible to keep lovers at a distance."

"Well," thought Alonzo, "as *she* is engaged, and *I* married, there *can* be no danger:" and that very evening (for the lady, he understood, was not permitted to receive morning visitors,) beheld him at the Countess's.

An intimacy soon sprung up between them, as was natural between persons of the same age and station in a foreign country. There was no one that Viola was, or appeared, half so pleased to see as Don Alonzo. She had always a new song to sing to him, a new drawing to show to him, or a new book to recommend. She was fond of chess, and many a happy moment did he spend while the Countess was engaged at her whist. But never in his eyes was she so fascinating as when, passing the black ribbon of her guitar over her shoulder, she accompanied herself in *their* own beautiful national melodies; her voice was exquisitely sweet and clear; the execution finished and graceful. At those moments an exclusive affinity appeared to exist between them; although there might be, and often were, numerous other listeners and admirers, it was *his* eye only that she sought for approval.

They met frequently at public places, and also at other houses. Viola was a beautiful dancer, and he felt proud (he knew not why, for it was nothing to him,) of the admiration she excited. Sometimes he waltzed with her, and with a beating heart caught here and there a half whisper from the spectators — "The two Brazilians — an interesting couple, are they not?"

It was thought better that Viola, on account of her peculiar situation, should continue to observe, although in England, the strict form of her own national manners. Immediately after dancing she returned to the side of the Countess or her chaperone; she never went out for exercise except when so accompanied, and she never received any visitor except in such presence. These arrangements gave great satisfaction to Alonzo, (he did not know why, for it was nothing to him,) although he frequently suffered by them.

"Guard your heart!" conscience whispered to Alonzo. Alas! his heart had escaped — but he guarded his manners, and they were the next best security: he tried to watch even his very eyes; he never flirted, he never complimented; in fact, he succeeded so well, that the Countess and Mr. Mordaunt appeared to have no suspicion; but he could not deceive himself, and he was not quite so sure that he deceived Viola.

Time glided by unheeded: the London season was near its close, when, one morning at breakfast, Mr. Mordaunt observed, "Well, Alonzo, time gets on, we are now in July, and before the end of October you must be safely landed at Rio. We must secure your passage in the next month's packet."

All this was well known and fully expected, yet did the intimation astound Alonzo. "So soon! *can* it be possible!"

The same evening they were *en famille* at the Countess's: the whist and

chess tables were arranged as usual. "What are you thinking of, Don Alonzo, to make such a move as that?" inquired Viola: "you are a little absent — out of spirits this evening."

"I ought not to be so," said Alonzo, trying to rally, "for we have been busy all day planning and arranging about our voyage home."

"Indeed!" said Viola. Alonzo thought she sighed: certainly she in her turn made a false move. Soon after, a servant entered with a case of jewels belonging to Viola, which had returned from being repaired: while looking at them Alonzo observed, that she was not a little envied by the London belles for the splendour of her jewels.

"How comes it," said she, "that I never see *you* wear any ornaments, not even a ring? Our young Brazilian beaux are naturally so fond of these decorations."

"I assure you," said Mr. Mordaunt, looking off his cards, "Don Alonzo has one of the most superb rings I ever saw — a single yellow diamond of great value."

Alonzo felt irritated, he scarcely knew why, and replied in a bitter sarcastic tone, quite unusual with him — "Yes, I have a yellow diamond, indeed, that I never wish to see, or to show to any one else."

The words were scarcely out of his mouth before he felt their impropriety. "Draw your card, my lady, if you please," said Mr. Mordaunt.

"Check," cried Alonzo, and with an effort looked at Viola. She was leaning on her hand; and her large, black, and brilliant eyes, with their long up-turned lashes were fixed on his. He started at the look — why or wherefore he could not imagine. — The eyes were withdrawn, and the game continued.

A few evenings after, he was leading her from a dance to place her as usual by the side of the Countess; they had to traverse three or four crowded rooms before they could reach the one where her ladyship was seated at whist; they moved very slowly and loiteringly along, seemingly in no great hurry to arrive at their destination.

"Are you *really* going to leave us next month, Don Alonzo?"

"Really: — and *you*, Donna Viola, what becomes of you?"

"I go to Portugal."

"And *there*?" said Alonzo in an inquiring tone.

"O there *we* shall not remain long; our Brazilian property will require our presence."

"Then we shall meet again," said Alonzo eagerly.

"I hope so — I dare say, in a few months."

"Well, that is some comfort!" — and he seemed to respire more freely; then after a pause — "but I shall never again meet *Viola*!"

"But Viola, Don Alonzo," she replied firmly, "will meet you as she has always met you; what she has been, she will continue to be — your sincere and affectionate friend."

"Thank you, Viola, thank you! — but pray do not speak another word to me just now." He placed her in her seat, and without looking at her, turned away and left the house.

Mr. Mordaunt had accepted the pressing invitation of Alonzo to accompany him to Brazil: their passage was taken and their preparations well forward. Alonzo paid his farewell visits, and did all that was necessary on the occasion, with the most perfect composure.

A passage was also taken for Viola and her suite in the Lisbon Packet, and the day was fixed for her leaving town for Falmouth. The day following was decided on by Alonzo for the same purpose, but this he managed to conceal from her.

The morning before her departure, he called on the Countess. "You are come to take leave of Donna Viola," said her ladyship.

"No, I am not, I am come to take leave of you, (for I also am on the eve of quitting London,) and to thank you for all your kind attention."

"But why not of Viola?" said the Countess; "she will be so disappointed."

"It is better I should not."

"But what am I to say to her?" inquired she.

"Precisely what I have just said, — that it is better I should not."

The Countess returned no reply; and with all good wishes on each side, they parted.

The Weather was beautiful, and Mr. Mordaunt appeared to enjoy his journey exceedingly; but Alonzo was absorbed in thought, and it was only now and then, when Mr. Mordaunt touched upon his approaching meeting with his father and his old Rio friends, that Alonzo could be roused for a moment. At the inns too he occasionally heard something that attracted his silent attention, of the beautiful young foreigner who had passed the day before.

They arrived at Falmouth in the morning to breakfast. With a beating heart, Alonzo inquired concerning the foreign lady and the Lisbon packet: the lady had gone on board the evening before, and the Lisbon and Rio packets were to sail early on the following morning.

After breakfast, the two gentlemen were engaged superintending the embarkation of their servants and baggage, and having taken an early dinner, went on board.

It was a lovely evening. Alonzo glanced at the merry and busy town of Falmouth, the numerous vessels, and the broad Atlantic, which lay stretched out before him: then his eye fixed, as though there were nothing else worth looking at, on the small vessel that lay nearest to him. He suddenly left his station, descended into a boat, and was in a few minutes on board.

In the outer cabin he met the duenna, who looked very much surprised at seeing him; but without speaking, threw open the door of the after cabin: — he entered, and the door closed behind him.

Viola lay on a couch, apparently absorbed in reading: the noise startled her, and she looked up; but nothing can express the astonishment painted on her countenance at the sight of Alonzo, who stood fixed as a statue before her. She sprang from the couch, and evidently her first feeling was to run towards him, but probably the strangeness of his look and demeanour arrested her; for she checked herself, and exclaimed, "Don Alonzo!"

"Viola!" said he, seizing both her hands, and gently forcing her to return to the seat she had left: "Viola!" (the word seemed to choke him,)

"I cannot live without you — you are yet free, have pity on me!"

"Alonzo," she asked, in a tremulous voice, "are you free?"

"I am not irrevocably bound."

In a moment she seemed to recover her self-possession, and replied, "Then I must tell you, that *I am*. You are labouring under a fatal error; you think I am but engaged — *I am married*. — But stay!" she exclaimed, alarmed at the effect of her communication, — "stay! — one moment! — Alonzo! — I beseech you!"

It was in vain; he almost shook her off, rushed to his boat, and in a few minutes was on board of his own vessel: he pushed by Mr. Mordaunt, and every body and every thing that impeded his way to his cabin, where locking the door, he threw himself on his bed, in a state of mind not to be described.

Mr. Mordaunt took possession of the boat Alonzo had quitted, went on board the Lisbon packet, and had an interview with Donna Viola.

At day-break the following morning, Alonzo, wrapped in a cloak, and his hat slouched over his brow, stood on the deck, watching with gloomy composure the Lisbon packet getting under weigh: she soon began to move, — a few minutes more, and she was dashing through the water close

beside him. Desperate thoughts for an instant darkened his mind; a feeling of revenge and despair, beset him, and he felt a strong temptation to plunge into the wake of the flying vessel, — when one of the latticed windows of the after-cabin was suddenly thrown open; he saw a waving handkerchief, and then the form of Viola herself, her eyes streaming with tears, kissing both her hands, and waving them to him. He had just time to return the salutation: his dark purpose vanished, the weakness of his mother came over him, and he wept: “She loves me!” — that thought alone, single and abstracted, brought back the blood in a rush of transport to his heart: “She loves me! — and nobly sets me the example of a virtuous submission to our fate!”

A friendly hand at that moment was laid on his; Mr. Mordaunt drew him to his cabin. “Alonzo,” he said. “I have been sadly to blame, — I ought to have foreseen and guarded against all this. Donna Viola, whom I saw last evening, bade me give you this note,” putting one into his hand.

Alonzo tore it open. “Alonzo, I conjure you, for the sake of your father — for *my* sake — struggle against your fatal and hopeless passion! We shall very soon meet again, — let us meet in peace, in innocence, and friendship! Heaven bless you, and heaven forgive us both, for we have been much to blame! Viola.”

Viola was very inexperienced, and Mr. Mordaunt knew very little about love, otherwise Alonzo had never received this note, which only added fuel to the flame: he kept it next his heart, and read it every day during the passage. He questioned Mr. Mordaunt closely concerning his interview with Viola the preceding evening, and especially inquired whether he could give him any information concerning her husband. “I am told,” he said, “that he is a man of high rank, very rich, old, and infirm. He has married the orphan daughter of his friend, merely as a safeguard to her and her property in these dangerous times.” At this intelligence, Alonzo’s heart bounded with secret joy: he became comparatively tranquil, but he would not analyse his feelings — he dared not.

A few weeks brought them to Rio. On entering its superb harbour Mr. Mordaunt was struck with admiration at the magnificent and beautiful scenery that surrounded him; but to the heart of Alonzo it spoke yet more feelingly, entwined as it was with all his dear and early associations. He could have kissed the black and barren rock of the Sugar-Loaf: it was passed, and threw open the graceful sweep of the Bay of Botafogo, surrounded with its wooded and lofty mountains: this too was passed, and the harbour of Rio appeared. Great political changes had taken place, and the imperial flag waved upon every fort and hill. The visiting boat approached, and by the side of the officer sat Alonzo’s watchful and expecting father, who in a few minutes more was locked in the arms of his son. On their landing, friends crowded round them: in the afternoon they visited the good kind Abbess; and the evening was employed in renewing Alonzo’s recollections of his young female friends, most of whom had now become wives and mothers; and those whom he had known as children had started up into young women, a process remarkably rapid in that country. He was pleased to observe the vast improvement that, even during the short period of his absence, had taken place at Rio, as far as concerned the comforts and refinements of domestic life. On the following morning he was presented at court: — in short, for two or three days he had not leisure even to look melancholy.

But one morning after breakfast, (a time universally agreed upon for making disagreeable communications,) his father informed him that in about a month, Donna Isabella might be expected with her father and aunt. “I have taken a temporary residence for you, which I think you

will like, at Botafogo — (I say *temporary*, for you will soon be offered, what you most desire, a diplomatic mission to Europe :) and the furnishing and arranging this residence has been my hobby for the last six months. If you and Mr. Mordaunt have no objection, we will ride to see it this afternoon." "If you please, sir," was the only reply; and, accordingly, at the appointed time they set out. The house and situation were both delightful; the furniture tasteful and costly. The apartment peculiarly appropriated to Donna Isabella, and called her garden-room, opened into a delicious parterre; it contained tables for needle-work and drawing, book-cases filled with a choice collection in English, French, and Italian: there were also a piano, harp, and guitar.

"Is Donna Isabella such a proficient in music?" asked Alonzo with a sarcastic smile. "She is, I believe, very fond of it," quietly replied the Marquess. Alonzo, with much warmth and sincerity, thanked his father for the kind pains he had taken; then sighed, and thought how happy he could be here with — certainly not with Donna Isabella.

After the first novelty of his arrival had worn off, Alonzo relapsed into sadness; a settled gloom was gathering on his youthful brow, a sickening indifference to all around was gradually stealing over him. His father and Mr. Mordaunt did all they could to arouse and distract his attention. Excursions into the country were frequently made, especially to the botanical garden about six miles from the city. It is arranged with exquisite order and good taste, encircled by bold and rugged mountain-scenery, opening towards the ocean, — reposing in all its richness of floral beauty, with its shady and stately trees, its leafy bowers and gushing streams, like a gem in the wilderness, — like the decked and lovely bride of a dark-browed warrior in those stern days of "auld lang syne," of which one loves to dream in spots like these. Water-parties to the many beautiful islands, — society and study, — were all tried, and in vain: every day, every hour, seemed to increase the despondency of Alonzo; but he never complained, never even touched in any way upon the subject that caused it. Upwards of three weeks passed in this manner.

Alonzo was fond of the society of the Abbess: with the unerring tact of her sex, she managed his present mood; she would sit opposite to him, employed at her old-fashioned embroidery frame, for an hour without speaking: this was just what he liked. One afternoon he had ensconced himself in his accustomed seat in her little grated parlour: he scarcely observed her entrance, but instead of seating herself at her frame, she stepped towards him.

"Alonzo, I am glad you have come, for I was just going to send for you."

"To send for me?" repeated he listlessly.

"Yes, a friend of yours has arrived at the convent, and wishes to see you."

"A friend of mine!"

"You recollect, I suppose, Donna Viola de Montezuma?"

He started from his seat — the shock was electric.

"Viola, did you say! — Donna Viola! — recollect her! — what of her? — what of her?"

"She has become a widow."

"Go on!"

She arrived at Lisbon just in time to receive the last breath of her expiring husband. After the funeral, she consigned her affairs there into proper hands, and delayed not a moment in returning to this country, where they demand her instant attention. She arrived yesterday, and remains here for a short time. She wishes to see you."

"I am ready," said Alonzo.

The Abbess left the room. "This is too—too much!" he exclaimed aloud, as he paced the little parlour with hurried steps. A slight rustling near the grate arrested him: it was Viola in deep mourning, looking more lovely and interesting than ever. She presented him her hand through the grate—he knelt, and prest it to his lips, to his heart, to his burning forehead. "Alonzo," she said in the kindest and most soothing tone, "I have heard from the Abbess of your marriage, and fear that I have innocently contributed to render that, which might have proved the highest blessing, a source of bitter misery. What can I do but to entreat you to arm yourself with the resolution of acting right? I confess that your forcing me to lose my esteem for you, would be the greatest pain you could inflict, even although your affection for me were the cause. Promise me, Alonzo—"

He hastily interrupted her: "I will promise nothing—nothing!—Heaven grant that I may do what is right, but, in the present state of my mind, I will pass my word for nothing."

Viola sighed. "Well," she resumed, "I shall see whether Alonzo be really what I believed him, or not: I shall see whether he be capable of sacrificing the happiness of his young and innocent wife, and of his doating father—his own honour and principles, to the shadow of a shade; for such is all hope of me. Heaven bless you, Alonzo! and support you through this trial! You have my prayers, my best, my warmest wishes: *deserve* to be happy, and leave the rest to Providence."

She disappeared:—he still remained kneeling at the grate, apparently wrapt in thought: at length a ray of light seemed to break through the darkness that surrounded him; a single spark of hope saved him from utter despair. He decided that in his first interview with Donna Isabella, he would reveal every secret of his heart; he would conjure her, as she valued their mutual happiness, to assist him in breaking the tie that had been made between them: he would recall to her recollection the fatal hour of their union, when reluctance on his side, and the necessity of absolute force on hers, formed but an evil omen of future concord. Since that moment they had never met, had never even corresponded; he had formed elsewhere a deep and serious attachment, and so perhaps had she. As to the debt he had incurred towards her and her family, with a little time and indulgence it would be cleared, as the property in Portugal was on the eve of being restored to his father. Thus, if they acted with determination, and in unison, there could be no doubt of their succeeding in breaking the galling fetters in which the mistaken zeal of their relatives had bound them. "If," he exclaimed, "she be not utterly devoid of the common pride and delicacy of her sex, there is but one step to take:—she will—she must take it—and I shall become free and happy!"

Full of this thought, he left the convent; and, on his return home, sought Mr. Mordaunt, and laid his project before him. Mr. Mordaunt listened with the utmost kindness and sympathy: he saw but one objection to the attempt: if Donna Isabella, in spite of all he could urge, should refuse to enter into his views, how much wider would it make the breach between them! how much would it diminish their chance of happiness! But to this side of the picture, Alonzo absolutely refused to turn; and Mr. Mordaunt, seeing him perfectly resolved, gave up the point, glad, at all events that Alonzo had even this slight support to lean upon until the crisis arrived.

At the top of the Marquess's small and rather inconvenient abode, was a room which, on account of its height and airiness, and the view of the harbour it commanded, the gentlemen preferred to breakfast, and to spend the morning in: a spy-glass was fixed here, to which of late the eye of the Marquess had been often and anxiously applied. One morning, about a

week after the scene just described, the Marquess seemed more than usually on the alert, watching the approach of a fine Brazilian merchant-ship. "Is she near the fort?"—"here she comes,"—"she is abreast of it,"—"now for it!" and as he spoke, up flew a private signal. The Marquess clasped his hands, and exclaimed in a half-whisper, to Mr. Mordaunt, "Thank heaven, there they are at last!" and the two gentlemen instantly left the room.

"Well," thought Alonzo, "I am not bound to know that there they are at last, until I am informed of it;" and he tried again to rivet his attention to his study. Three intolerably long hours passed away: a note was then brought to him from the Marquess: "Donna Isabella, her aunt, and father, have arrived, and are now at Botafogo. The two ladies are somewhat fatigued, and prefer not receiving you until the evening; therefore between seven and eight Mr. Mordaunt and the carriage will be at your door."

Alonzo sent away his untouched dinner; he dressed *en grande toilette*; and, taking down Walter Scott's last new novel, strove to fix his attention on its delightful pages. Alonzo had generally the power of exercising great mastery over his mind; to an indifferent observer he would appear rather cold, reserved, and not easily acted upon in any way; but, when his feelings once burst their barrier, it was with a violence proportioned to the restraint he had thrown over them.

At half-past seven, the carriage drew up to the door, and Alonzo immediately descended to it. "I am glad to see you are quite ready," said Mr. Mordaunt, as he entered: the door closed; and they drove off.

"You have seen Donna Isabella?" inquired Alonzo.

"Yes, I have," was the laconic reply, with evidently a wish of saying no more. After a considerable pause, Mr. Mordaunt asked whether he still kept to his purpose.

"Certainly," said Alonzo firmly—and no further conversation passed.

Half an hour brought them to their destination: with a throbbing heart, Alonzo descended from the carriage. They were shown into the *grand sala*, brilliantly lighted. Here were assembled Senhor Josef and Senhora Theresa, the Marquess, and the Abbess with an attendant nun; the old lady had not left her convent for many years, but on this occasion she was determined to be present.

Alonzo saluted Senhor Josef and his sister, with gravity, but perfect and sincere kindness; he kissed the hand of his aunt; then, turning to his father, begged to know where he might find Donna Isabella.

"She waits for you in her garden-room," replied the Marquess. Alonzo bowed, and left the *sala*.

He struggled successfully to continue the same appearance of composure, as he passed along the corridor which led to the garden-room: the door was ajar; he entered and closed it.

The room was only lighted by a single Grecian lamp, suspended from the centre; the latticed doors leading to the garden were thrown open, and the moon-beams quivered brightly on the rich festoons of flowers and foliage that twined around them. Leaning on the harp near the furthest door, stood a lady magnificently dressed as a bride; one hand hung listlessly at her side, in the other were gathered the folds of her veil, in which her face was buried. Alonzo advanced, and although somewhat prepared for a favourable alteration, he was struck with astonishment at the exquisitely fine and graceful form that stood before him. "Donna Isabella, I believe:"—no reply, and no change of position. He approached a little nearer, and ventured to take the unoccupied hand, whose slight and delicate fingers were covered with gems, but on the arm was only a single bracelet, and that was of *pink topaz*. "Donna Isabella, I venture to claim a few minutes' private conversation with you, on a subject that deeply concerns

the happiness of us both : permit me to lead you to a seat." He paused—the emotion that visibly pervaded her whole frame convinced him that at least he was not addressing a statue. Suddenly she raised her head, clasped her hands, and sunk on her knees at his feet. Alonzo recoiled, as though a supernatural appearance had presented itself, while with a tone that thrilled through heart and brain, she exclaimed—

"Alonzo, can you forgive me?"—It was Viola!

"Can you forgive me for all the deception I have practised, and caused others to practise? May the prize I strove for—my husband's heart—plead my excuse! I know it will!"

While she spoke, Alonzo in some degree recovered himself. He raised up the beautiful suppliant, and folding her in silence to his breast, kissed her with pure, intense, and devoted affection. He could not speak; he thought not and cared not how it had all been brought about; he only knew and felt that his wife was in his arms, and that *that wife was Viola*.

The party in the drawing-room, to whom the duenna was now added, were in an agony of impatient expectation. The Marquess at length led the way, and they all crept softly along the passage: "May we come in?"

"Come in," said Alonzo—the first words he had spoken since the denouement.

Their entrance dispersed, in a great measure, the concentrated feelings of Alonzo, and he became attentive to learn the mechanism by which his present happiness had been effected. It appeared that the prepossession Isabella had conceived for her husband at the altar had produced a striking change on her, as love did on Cymon. Ill health, the absence of the usual means of education at St. Paul's, the ignorance and weak indulgence of those with whom she resided, had allowed weeds to spring up and choke the rich treasures of her mind. However, she accompanied the Marquess from St. Paul's, and was placed by him under the charge of the Abbess, where, in three years, her improvement in health, beauty, and mental attainments astonished all those who observed it. The two years she passed in England, under the most judicious care, had brought her to that point of perfection to which she had now arrived.

Alonzo had not the slightest recollection of any of her features except her eyes, which on the day of their union had that large size and troubled expression which usually attends ill-health. He could now account for the startling recollection that had passed over him one evening at the chess-board; the look she then gave and that with which she had impressed him on her leaving the oratory, were the same.

"And you, my grave and worthy tutor," said Alonzo, addressing Mr. Mordaunt, "did you join in this powerful league against me?"

"I confess," replied Mr. Mordaunt, "that I was in the service of the enemy; so much so, that on the evening you first met Donna Viola, and were introduced to her at the opera, I knew beforehand that such a meeting and such an introduction would take place. I take this opportunity, however, of hinting, that you may thank your own impetuosity that the discovery was not prematurely advanced on board of the Lisbon Packet; for Donna Viola, terrified at your vehemence, would have revealed the whole truth, could she but have prevailed upon you to stay and hear it."

"Alas! for my vehemence," exclaimed Alonzo; and trying to collect his puzzled thoughts, he turned to the Abbess: "And you too, my dear aunt,—you too, my Lady Abbess! it is well you have the power of absolving yourself for all those little fibs you told me the other day."

"May Our Lady grant me absolution," replied the good Abbess devoutly, "for whatever stain of sin I may have contracted by playing a part in this masque!"

"Supper! supper!" cried out the Marquess, as he marshalled them the way. Alonzo seized his Viola (for thus he ever after named her, as if he dreaded that some magical delusion would again snatch her from his sight) — and never did a set of happier creatures meet than those which now encircle the sumptuous banquet, prepared in honour of this Brazilian Wedding.

MUSTAPHA THE PHILANTHROPIST.

A TALE OF ASIA MINOR.

[From the "*Friendship's Offering*" for 1826.]

MUSTAPHA Ben Mustapha, Ben Ali, Ben Kaled, thou wast well-known, long-loved, and deeply-lamented. Tears are still shed upon the turban stone that marks the spot where thy remains sleep the sleep of the holy; the young women spread their veils upon thy grave, the young men pray to be like thee, brave, beautiful, and beloved; the old men thank Allah, that thou wast the light of their infancy, and the glory of their land. Yet thy sun was long clouded by sorrow, thy name was long stained by calumny, and anguish long bowed to the earth the brow that was yet to wear the heron plume of power, and the diamond chelenck of the favour of the Sultan, king of kings.

The father of Mustapha was one of the beys of Karamania, the chief of a tribe, the lord of a hundred villages, and crowning all his honours with the glory of having made the pilgrimage to Mecca. Thus rich, powerful, and a Hadgi, he had obtained the highest rank of felicity allotted to mortal man; his name became a proverb throughout Anatolia for prosperity; and when the Mollah blessed the marriages of the Moslem, he always added, "May thy good fortune be as the good fortune of the bey Mustapha, and may thy head be as firmly fixed on thy shoulders; may thy purse as long escape public robbery, and mayst thou, like him, sleep on the pillow of security, till thou goest to the world where men are neither plundered, beheaded, nor bowstringed, because they are richer, better, or longer-lived, than their neighbours."

But all have their troubles. There never was a sky which will not show a cloud now and then. There never was a lake without a ripple. Even the Bey Mustapha had his troubles. They came in the shape of a son; that son was the finest youth in all Karamania, handsome, generous, brave, and beloved. The old Bey gazed on him with pride, the tribe with veneration; he was the theme of the poet's song, of the story-teller's tale, and of the warriors' carousal. But in the midst of those bright prospects, there was a spot which looked full of storm, to the eye of the sagacious father. His son was a genius; the Bey was a man of sense, his son was a speculator; the Bey was content with the world as he found it, his son was a philosopher; but the Bey pointed towards the distant towers of Constantinople, and asked whether philosophy could keep him out of their dungeons? At length his time was come, as it comes to all. From his pillow, which overlooked one of the most smiling prospects of Asia Minor, he gave his gallant and sorrowing son charge over his inheritance; finally he put into his hands an emerald signet, wrought with a mysterious inscription. "This," said the old man; "is the talisman of our house; it has kept us safe even

under the scimitar of the sultan, for a hundred and fifty years. Keep it, until you must give it up, like me, with all things human." His son took the talisman with tears and awe, pressed it to his lips, and then attempted to decypher the inscription. It was totally unintelligible to him. "The language," said the Bey; "in which those words are written, is not capable of being read by one in a thousand, of any time of life; nor by one in a million of yours. If you shall die without learning it, you shall die in a dungeon: therefore learn it, son of my heart, as soon as you can." The Bey's voice had already sunk to a whisper. His son clasped his hand in filial anguish, and knelt beside the couch of the dying chief. "Where," asked he, "is this sacred language to be learned, O my father?" The Bey was silent; speech had perished on his lips; but he pointed to heaven, and then, with his hand on the head of his son, gave his spirit to the angels.

Mustapha was proclaimed Bey by the acclamations of a thousand of the finest horsemen in Anatolia. The world spread around him a prospect of beauty. Gold and jewels were like sand before him. The morning rose on the prayers of his people for his prosperity, and the evening heard the cry of the Muezzins returned by the songs of the Karamanian shepherds from the hills, in praise of Mustapha the flower of the land; but the acclamations of the thousand horsemen were more grateful to the ear of the young warrior. Their squadrons galloping on the plain before the palace, the flashing of their scymetars, their adroitness with the pistol and the spear, kindled the passion which finds a place in the bosom of every Anatolian youth. In his glowing temperament it blazed into a devouring flame. But the flame must wait for a vent. In the meantime, he set his vivid invention to work: his quick eye saw a hundred defects in the equipment, management, and manœuvres, of his troops. He introduced remedies for them all. But the troops saw no necessity for their being wiser than their fathers. Like them, they could shoot an eagle on the wing, and cut through a turban at a stroke, — rein up a charger in full gallop, and slice a Persian or Curdistan skirmisher from the crown of the head to the chin. But their chieftain must be obeyed. He was obeyed, and his popularity instantly fell fifty degrees.

Mustapha keenly felt the difference between the faint cry with which he was welcomed in his next exercise of the squadrons, and the ardent acclamation that hailed his former presence. But his conviction of the true importance of the improvements was too strong to suffer him to go back. "They are my children," said he, as he returned dejectedly from one of those days in which his horsemen had manœuvred incomparably on the new plan, yet had suffered him to depart from the field without the waving of a sword. "I must treat them as such, bear with their follies, and leave them to have more sense as they get more knowledge. But it is unfortunate that we have not war. A week's real work would teach them the use of those changes, and they would then know how to value them as they deserve."

As he was reaching his palace, in a gloomier mood than he had ever felt before, he saw a horseman riding down the neighbouring hill at full speed. As he approached, the yellow cap, and the imperial dragon on his breast showed that he was one of the Tartars of the Porte. He brought dispatches. They announced that the Muscovite dogs had dared to bark at the sublime Father of the faithful, and, what was more, to bite; that the Sultan had already condescended to retreat before the Infidel, for the mere purpose of destroying them within his own territory, and thus fertilizing his fields with their bones; that the Muscovite dogs being inspired by Satan, and not seeing the purpose of this discreet movement, had followed his Mightiness the Vizier, had dared to attack him two several times, — for which might their souls be speedily given to the black angel Monkiair, and their bodies to the ditches of Bulgaria, — even had the additional insolence to seize his cannon and baggage, and actually pushed their madness

to the extent of threatening to march on Constantinople. The dispatch concluded with a command that the thousand cavalry under the orders of the Bey Mustapha, should instantly march to join the faithful army of the Padishah, in driving the Infidels into the Danube. The dark eyes of Mustapha flashed fire as he read the words. He was now in the path to honours unbounded; his quick imagination saw before him fame, commands, national homage. He ordered the trumpets instantly to sound, recalled his horsemen eagerly, and told them the tidings. The Karamanian is brave by nature. He loves plunder, victory, gold-hilted scymetars, and fine horses; and he expected to find them all on the west of the Propontis. The squadrons were weary of their days of discipline. They flourished their pikes, and swords rejoicingly, and gave the young Bey the first shout that he had heard from them for a month. In four-and-twenty hours he was in march, and the march never halted until he was in view of the bright waters of the Bosphorus.

All hitherto was exultation. The showy Bey and his Arab charger shared the praises of the whole Moslem populace, who thought it worth their while to leave their coffee cups, to see the handsomest soldier mounted on the handsomest horse in the Ottoman dominions. His cavalry won the next praise. Never had the idlers of Constantinople seen such dashing riders, so capably equipped, with turbans so rich, castans so embroidered, and boots so worthy of the sultan's body guard. The European Spahis looked on with envy; but the Delhis, who always come from Anatolia, and go, fate only knows where, triumphed in so brilliant a body of comrades, and swore that they were worthy to fall into their rear. Nothing could be a higher compliment.

Their trial soon came. From the summit of a low range of barren hills in Bulgaria, Mustapha one day saw a mob of foot and horse rambling about the country, some quarrelling, some robbing, some cooking, and some with their dogs loose, looking for game. He inquired of a peasant what this strange medley meant. To his utter astonishment he was told, that this was the Turkish army. This was enough; the cause of their defeats was evident. What could be done against the Muscovite bayonets and guns, with an army one half of whom were forced to rob for food, and the other to rob the robbers? His genius was instantly on the alert. He conceived a plan for at once restoring their discipline, and supplying their food; and determined to take the first opportunity of earning immortal fame by enlightening the brains of the blundering Vizier. But what was to be done with a commander-in-chief who had been a slipper-maker, and had never known the use of steel but in his own awl? His highness listened to the plan of the young Bey with a smile; said that it was excellent, but impracticable; that the Ottomans had been in the habit of conquering their enemies without these new inventions, and by the blessing of Mahomet, they would conquer them still. The Vizier having said thus much made a sign to one of his attendants, and dropping his head on the sofa, fell asleep.

Mustapha indignantly returned to his tent. Some of his officers came round him on his entrance. "Comrades," said he, "I have failed. My infallible plan has been thrown away on the ears of that hog of a slipper-maker. He was drunk when I went, he was asleep when I came away. So, fight or fight not, we must be starved." He rushed into the tent, and unbuckling his Scymetar, began to meditate on the first fruits of his glory. A slight noise roused him; and he saw one of the Capidgis, with the Vizier's order for his head in one hand, and the bowstring in the other. It was clear that he had not yet learned to read the language of the talisman. The Capidgi came forward, to teach him a lesson on the liberty of speech. A true Turk would have given his neck in return. But Mustapha was too new to life to have acquired its perfect courtesies. He was a mountaineer,

and rode in proportion. His only answer to the respectful salutation of the Capidgi, was a blow with the hilt of his loosened scymetar which brought the Sultan's officer to the ground. He then tore the order, and kicked the unfortunate instrument of justice out of the tent. He was on the point of mounting his charger, to lay the whole affair before the Divan; when a most flattering message arrived from the Vizier, apologizing for "the misconduct of the officer, who was on the point of being bastinadoed for his error," and requesting the company of the Bey to take coffee, and receive the command of a brigade of cavalry. Mustapha was instantly appeased. He flew to the Vizier's tent, was welcomed with remarkable graciousness, and was in the act of smoking the pipe of honour, when he felt his hands bound, and was marched, without another word, to the rear of the tent, where, on looking for his accusers, he could see nothing but the same Capidgi, bowing with habitual grace, and half a dozen mutes, ready to perform that ceremony upon him which supersedes all others. "This comes," he murmured bitterly, "of attempting to put knowledge into the heads of asses. Let me escape but this once, and the world may fool itself after its own way, for the rest of my existence." The reflection was tardy, for the mutes were in the act of fastening the string round his neck. Another moment would have extinguished the man of genius. But at that moment a shell whizzing through the air, dropped into the centre of the group. The applicant of the string was crushed into mummy. Three others were shattered into fragments by the explosion. Mustapha stood a free man again. The Vizier's tent was set in a blaze, and he rushed through it in the confusion, and regained his own; in infinite wrath with blunderers of all kinds; but not yet including the teacher of tactics to slipper-makers.

He found the camp in a state of horrible clamour. The Infidels had made good a part of their promise, and were advancing to Constantinople, by marching over the bodies of the left wing of his Mightiness's army. The other wing was spreading out its plumage for such flight as it could manage; in other words, one half of the Ottoman host had been soundly beaten, and the other half were running away. He also found his gallant squadron taking it for granted that he had gone the path of all Beys who are too wise for their generation, and who take coffee with grand viziers. But his presence restored their discipline at once. The Muscovites were covering the field with squadrons of horse, and mowing down every thing with their artillery. Mustapha moved his cavalry to the cover of a wood, formed them with admirable skill, and then advancing on a division of the Muscovites who were pursuing in the heat of victory, charged through and through them, and cut them to pieces. Nothing could be more lucky for the Vizier; for in two minutes more he must have been a prisoner, or trampled under the feet of the Muscovite lancers. The enemy, at this unexpected check, drew back, and the night falling, the Ottomans made their escape, glad to leave their tents behind them. This affair raised Mustapha's name prodigiously, and visions of glory began to kindle him again. The first dispatches from Constantinople displaced the slipper-maker, and fixed the Bey at the head of the forces, with orders to beat the enemy, and follow them to St. Petersburg. But what was to be done, with an army of banditti? He instantly drew out a code of regulations. It was incomparable, and its announcement was hailed with universal joy. But its first attempt at practice raised a mutiny in every corps of the army. In this emergency, the new Vizier knew that his head was on his shoulders only till the messenger of the mutineers could return from the capital. He resolved to turn the tables by a victory; marched that night to find the enemy; found them; cut up their ~~forming~~ parties; drove in their outposts, and fell like a thunderbolt upon their main body. The Infidels were slaughtered in front of their lines, through their lines, and out of their lines. But day-break came; and they

relied. The Turkish cavalry had by this time jumped off their horses, and were packing up the plunder of the camp. Mustapha's quick eye saw the danger. But all the kettle drums, and trumpets of the earth could never draw a Turk from his plunder. The battle turned. The new Vizier fought with desperation: he gathered some bodies of horse from the skirts of the field, and bringing up his thousand Anatolians, formed the whole as a rear guard. But this was worse and worse. Their discipline was new to their countrymen, and at the first movement all was confusion. With agony of soul Mustapha saw his last column of horse fighting like a rabble, every man in his own style. The enemy's artillery were now playing on every battalion of his infantry: and his final look at the field showed them melting away like masses of snow on mount Hæmus. His next glance was at the canvas roof of a Russian tent. His horse had been knocked down by a six-pound shot, and he had been stunned by the fall, and found among the wrecks of the field. So much for the new tactics. Was he now to give his next glance at the roof of a Russian dungeon?

But this was a night of carousal in the Infidel camp. The general sent off a dozen couriers to St. Petersburg with dispatches, describing the battle as a series of the most exquisite manœuvres, by which he had drawn the enemy into a night attack, and routed them at his leisure. He demanded crosses and ribbands for himself, and inquired her imperial majesty's pleasure as to what chamber of the seraglio she would prefer for her present abode. But it is as impossible to keep the yellow-bearded Russ from brandy, as the black-bearded Turk from plunder. The captive Vizier was brought to the general's board; where he sat, until he saw him and his staff fall under it. He then threw the general's cloak over his shoulders, walked quietly to the spot where his horses were picketed, found the sentinels asleep, each man with a bottle beside him; led his horse through ten drunken regiments, and flinging the cloak over the eyes of the only man whom he found awake among fifty thousand, galloped off on the route to the capital. Indignant at his defeat, and more indignant at the stupidity which had sent the army into the field in a state which rendered victory all but impossible, he paused only to draw up a statement of the whole transaction, present it to the Sultan, and thus at once vindicate his own fame, and lay the foundation of conquests innumerable.

The paper was eloquent, admirably argued, and the most imprudent thing in the world. The Sultan received it from his anxious Vizier, with a look of the highest favour; even read it before he left the chamber, and at every sentence exclaimed, that he was a Solomon. Throwing over his neck a chain of diamonds of inestimable value, he departed, leaving the Vizier in exultation. But, as the door closed behind the retiring padishah, another opened. The Sultan's barber entered, glancing his eyes on the spot where the astonished Mustapha stood; he commanded his Janizaries to take away "the Anatolian Giaour, who yesterday had the insolence to call himself Vizier;" with further orders, "to lose no time in fixing the head of the traitor on the seraglio goal, and the quarters of the poltroon on the public scaffold."

"Long live his Highness Achmet the Vizier," was the answering cry of the Janizaries, who instantly flung themselves upon him, and dragged him away, protesting against this violation of all justice.

But this day was the anniversary of the famous Santon Abubeker, and on this, no criminal could be executed before sunset. Thrown into a gloomy cell of the palace, Mustapha called for one of the cadis of the seraglio, to receive his dying declarations of innocence; the question of his property, he took it for granted, was already settled by his executioners. He had now time to ponder on his own proceedings, "What an infinite blockhead I must have been," was his first congratulatory ejaculation; "to

trouble myself about patching up the brains of other blockheads. If men are accustomed to be beaten, woe to the meddler who attempts to teach them to beat. If I had left the Osmanli to run away according to their national tastes, I should now have been dining with the sultan, instead of preparing to drink sherbet so terribly against the grain, with the Houris." His soliloquy was interrupted by the arrival of the jailor, who ushered in a basket of dates, brought by a messenger from the cadi, to tell the dying man that, being invited to a ball at the Austrian embassy, he had sent one of his scribes, to hear what he had to say. The detail was brief; for as it began, the sun was setting, and the last dip of his rim in the Propontis was to be the signal of his parting with that head, which had been of so little use to him. "Prince," whispered the Scribe, as he pointed to the sinking orb; "there is but a moment between thee and death; what wouldst thou give, to leave the dungeon behind thee?"

"Lands, treasures, all that avarice could solicit," exclaimed the prisoner, his ardent nature starting into sudden energy and hope — "What aim I to do for life?"

"The task is the simplest, yet the most difficult in the world," was the reply; "It is, to keep thy thoughts to thyself."

Mustapha struck his forehead remorsefully. "If from this hour I ever try to make the world wiser than it chooses to be, may I be impaled in the Atmeidan!" was the quick exclamation. The cadi's deputy stamped upon the floor, and a low rumbling noise was heard; a stone gradually slipped on one side, and disclosed a dark, winding stair.

"In this cavern is safety," said the young Scribe, and plunged in; the prisoner followed. The stair led deep into the foundation of the palace; at length a glimpse of light was visible; he opened a grate, and the sea lay before them, broad, calm, and returning the silver beauty of ten thousand stars. At a signal, a boat appeared, starting from under the cypresses which line the seraglio wall. The Bey sprang into it, the messenger followed, and the steersman turned his helm away from the fatal shore, and hoisting his little sail, soon left mosque and tower far in the horizon. Mustapha felt all the sudden elation of liberty. He lavished promises of opulence upon his deliverer.

"You must, at least, promise me one thing," said the Scribe. "It is, not to send me back to Constantinople. Having obeyed my master's orders, I must think of myself; and a return to the shadow of the Sublime Porte would only substitute my head for yours." The pledge was given. The little vessel shot along, and by day-break it had reached the long and narrow line of rocks which embattle the shore of what once was Ilium.

The journey to the Karamanian hills was rapidly made; the Bey being informed by the young Scribe that orders had been already sent off for the confiscation of his lands; and his own energy being determined to counteract the blow if possible. They arrived just the evening before the Pasha of Karamania, who was ordered to execute the sentence. He was a daring, greedy, and licentious ruffian; and the sound of confiscation would raise a Turk of any degree from the bed of death. At day-break the trumpets of the Pasha were heard in front of the palace gate. Mustapha would have fought for his inheritance, had there been time to summon his people; but the Pasha was irresistible. His troop of five hundred Spahis instantly filled the courts, and a glorious day of plunder was expected; but the Pasha had no desire to indulge them with the treasures said to be stowed up in the jewel-chamber of the palace. There he proceeded alone. His surprise was excessive, at finding the chamber already occupied by a stranger, and that stranger Mustapha, who was supposed to have left his bones for the vultures. But the Pasha's insolence had not left him. He declared himself come to take possession of the lands of "a traitor, in the Sultan's name,"

and followed the words by a sweep of his scymetar. He had provoked a dangerous antagonist. Mustapha sprang aside, returned the blow, and rushed upon him like a roused tiger; he followed it by a second, and it was sufficient. The Pasha's head rolled at his feet.

His plan was instantly adopted. Knowing that successful rebellion always confers a title with the Porte, he took the Pasha's signet from his finger, wrote an order in his name commanding the Bey Mustapha to be reinstated in all his hereditary dignities, and having sealed it, locked the body in the room, and went forth to the people. The Janizaries murmured, but the popular voice was against them. They drew their swords, Mustapha lifted his finger, and instantly a volley was sent from every window, which laid one half of their number on the ground. The lesson was expressive; the rest laid down their arms, called their Pasha a traitor who had led the sons of the faithful to be butchered; and desired leave to enter into the service of the most magnanimous of Beys. Mustapha's sagacity told him that the Porte never quarrels with the bringer of presents. He sent the Pasha's diamond-hilted poniard and scymetar to the sultan, his purse to the Vizier, and distributed his horses among the divan. He received by the return of his Tartar, a firmaun from Constantinople, appointing him to succeed the deceased Pasha, as a "reward for his extinction of a rebel," and a promise of the first standard of three tails that fell to the imperial disposal. Ambition was now dawning on him again, and he longed to charge among the Muscovites, and bring off the heads of generals swinging at his saddle bow. But the cadî's messenger calmly pointed to the landscape round him; the mountains waving with forests of the most varied and vivid beauty, the plains covered with grain, the mosques, and minarets, the cottages, and pastures, — and asked, whether this was not better than being rescued from the bowstring by the explosion of a shell, or being within five minutes of the sharpest axe of the seraglio? As the youth spoke the words, and made his obeisance for having taken so great a liberty, Mustapha's eye glanced on his emerald; the letters were still unintelligible, but they seemed to assume a less cloudy shape. He now gave up the happiness of saving viziers, and being strangled for his pains; and resolved to be as happy as quiet and wealth could make him. But he was a genius, and when was a genius content with being as happy as quiet and wealth could make him? He went among his people, found every thing old, useless and absurd; made changes in all instances, and succeeded in nothing. The arts of husbandry had been the occupation of the peasant from the infancy of time. The arts themselves had never gone beyond their infancy. The Bey discovered a hundred improvements; the people were hard to be taught: in some instances, however, he prevailed on them in mere obedience to adopt his new ploughs, his new system of watering their ground in the fierce heats of an oriental summer, and his new contrivances for sheltering their cattle. But, for one example of obedience, there were ten of the contrary. "Intolerable fools," exclaimed he, when, after a day of argument with a group of clowns, he succeeded only in making them puzzled and himself angry: "What is the use of throwing away one's ideas on slaves as dull as the earth they tread?"

"None!" said the sententious young Scribe. Mustapha raised his aching head from the sofa, where he had flung himself in keen vexation; and darting his eagle eyes into the countenance of his young reprover, expected to have frowned him into the depths of humiliation. But, to his surprise, he was met by a glance as lofty as his own. It was the first time that he had distinctly seen that countenance; for the young Scribe habitually wore the deep turban of his profession, and his eye was constantly cast upon the ground. Now, however, it was shown fully, and struck him as singularly expressive. It had the classic form, and somewhat of the melancholy impress

of the Greek statue, but it was enlightened by the full splendour of the Asiatic eye. The Bey grew silent; a feeling of awe, respect, and submission, altogether new to his imperious spirit, influenced him, and from this moment he was conscious that he had a master.

The summer was beautiful, and the Bey exulted in the success of his experiments. Wherever he had directed the husbandry, all seemed to be more luxuriant than in the whole range of the land beside. But one evening, the sun plunged into a belt of clouds which mounted rapidly from the Mediterranean. The wind rose in wild gusts — night, sudden, chill and starless, covered the mountain forests as with a pall, under which the work of death was to go on undisturbed. The peasantry were roused from their sleep by the roar of sudden torrents, the thunderstorms set their mosques in a blaze, the lightning rified and scattered the ancient trees which for centuries had been the shelter of their cottages; all was ruin. When day rose, slow, sad, and imperfect, the landscape far and wide was one scene of desolation. But, if all were sufferers, the chief havoc fell upon the unlucky experimentalists of the Bey. A new process by which the land was to be prepared for a tenfold harvest in the ensuing year, had stripped the soil of its usual autumnal covering of shrubs, weeds, and copse. The wind and rain had taken full vengeance on the attempt to disturb the old plan. The soil was torn up to the very bowels, and the reward of the Bey was, to find his palace surrounded by the multitude in a state of insurrection, — charging him with their calamities, denouncing his rashness as the cause of the sufferings which had fallen on the soil from angry heaven; and demanding bread. The Bey was overwhelmed. The cry of a multitude was not to be resisted. Yet how was he to remedy the sufferings of thousands? He gave them all that his palace contained. It fed a few for a day! he sold his jewels! all was but a drop in the sand. The popular cry was raised louder still, when it was discovered that the Bey's liberality was increased, in proportion to the clamour. He was embarrassed, and turned to the young Scribe in his anxiety. "Stop!" was the brief answer; but the spirit of Mustapha was not made to stop in any thing. Liberal, eager, and lofty, he determined to show himself superior to this emergency. He now proceeded to strip himself of all that could be turned into value. The populace lived a week in lazy luxury, and liked this style of life so well that they determined to continue it as long as they were able. They at length used threats: those revolted the high mind of the Bey; he drove them from the palace gates. That night, he was roused by a knocking at his chamber door. As he opened his eyes, a broad glare of light burst across them. He looked out from the casement; a wing of his palace was in flames, and some thousands of the peasantry were flinging torches and combustibles on the remaining wing; while a host of women with children in their arms, were exclaiming against "the tyrant who had starved them." Mustapha grasped his scymetar, and would have rushed out among the ingrates. He was checked by a gentle but firm hand. It was the young Scribe's.

"Your time is not yet come to be torn to pieces by a rabble," said he; "follow me."

"And leave those heartless wretches unpunished?" was the quick exclamation of the Bey.

"Better leave any thing, than leave your own head on their pikes," was the calm answer, as the Scribe led him, almost unconsciously, down a dark corridor which opened on the palace gardens. The shouts rose again, and the flames burst triumphantly over the gilt cupola. The Bey turned; but the eye of his young guide was on him; and he felt its power. Two of his Arab chargers were standing saddled before him. The roar and the flame rose wilder together. "Time is precious," said the Scribe, mounting one of the horses. The Bey reluctantly mounted the other. The

Scribe gave his charger the rein. Both were instantly at full speed, and rushing like the wind towards the long and sandy shore of the Mediterranean, where it curves like a ring of gold, with Samos, blue and beautiful, a huge sapphire, in the rim.

For two days they wandered along the coast, until they reached the town of Scala Nova. The prospect had the usual loveliness of the west of Asia. The bright stream, the noble hills, the brilliant sea, the magnificent forests of Ionia, were before his eyes ; but he could see nothing but the flames rising over his palace, and hear nothing but the roar of the ungrateful multitude.

"Fool that I was!" he exclaimed, as he dashed his hand against his ample forehead ; "doubly fool, to expect that a generation of those souls of clay could understand my intentions."

"Time is the teacher," said the young Scribe ; "the man who does in one year what he ought to do in ten, must have a master of his own who will make him pay dear for his lessons. Try the world again." But the Bey scorned the world ; and resolved on turning dervise, or fakeer, or hermit.

"Let me go," said the impatient exile, "where never sight or sound of man will reach me. Or let me wander where the earth will be all alike to me, where in the length and breadth of universal brotherhood all individuality is forgotten : or let me be the bandit of Roumelia, the Arab of the Zaara, or the Tartar of the northern wilderness. Never will I be the friend, the protector, or the prince, again."

In two days more, a Venetian ship was to sail for Egypt, with pilgrims for the Holy House. "Before you make your trial of solitude," said the young scribe, "try how you like the march to Mecca." Mustapha was indifferent to every thing ; he would have marched to China, or the moon alike, if he could. "To Mecca then," was the answer. And they both went on board.

The passengers were, like all the living cargoes, which are yearly thrown on Arabia, composed of the produce of every nation, of the Moslem, Turks, Tartars, Persians, Indians, believers in all the shades of creeds, which make the map of Mahometanism as motly as the patches of a Jewish gaberdine. The season was lovely, the sea smooth, the wind was fair, and with a flowing sheet the vessel glided from the bay, and floated along the shores of that richest landscape of the world. Mustapha was delighted with the scene. All to him was new, and novelty was the food of his eager spirit ; but the sense of beauty, of grandeur, and of the overwhelming power of nature, luxuriated in the perpetual magnificence of the sky, the mountains, and the Ocean, that now expanded on him for the first time. He had never before seen the sea ; the Propontis was but a lake, and the Bosphorus but a river ; he now saw the majesty of the waters, spreading without a limit, sending forth the sun at dawn, as from some pearly palace in the depths of ocean, and at eve, opening their bosom for his descent among pavilions of purple and rose, and closing over him with billows of molten gold. As the vessel swept eastward from the Gulf of Macri, the mountain ranges, that make the rampart of the land from the violence of the winter storms, seemed to fly away behind him, light and rich coloured as the clouds, and swift as the clouds themselves. All was wild, fantastic, and vivid. The marble range of the Gulf of Macri was followed by the promontories that girdle the great Gulf of Satalla. Mustapha, without the consciousness of a poet, felt the creative thoughts of poetry ; and compared the summits of the mountains, as they sparkled with incessant radiance, to crowns of living jewels dropped on them from the skies ; or to the thrones of spirits that stoop from the stars to keep watch over the world. The glorious scene vanished, — only to be followed by a new multitude of all the shapes of beauty, rising from the distant waters like floating pearls, and constantly spreading and ascending, until they stood above him in gigantic heights and forms, some frowning in savage grandeur, some

clothed with sunshine like sheets of gold, some winding away bathed in twilight, like the figures of a long procession veiled in vestures of eternal purple. During the whole voyage down the coast between Rhodes and Scanderoon, Mustapha and the scribe were constantly on deck together, enjoying the luxuries of this great banquet of nature, but each according to his own feelings. Mustapha, with loud and eloquent delight ; the Scribe with deep and silent rapture. When the tongue of the noble Bey loftily poured out his wonder, the eyes of his young companion spoke it in the quiet tears of the soul. Yet this difference of their faculties was no hindrance to their friendship. It but gave a fine variety to their thoughts ; and Mustapha, new to the world, and newer still to himself, often turned away from all the splendours of earth and heaven, to fix his eyes on the countenance beside him, as its expression was touched by the moment, glowing with solemn enthusiasm, and alternately pale and crimson with the high devotion of a worshipper of nature.

But they were now to lose the enchanted shore ; and the vessel, leaving Scanderoon, ran down the coast of Syria. No change could be more complete ; all was the barren wilderness : even the sea seemed to share the melancholy monotony of the land. All around was intolerable glare : the horizon of the waters had the look of a vast buckler of brass. The air was stagnant : human life soured in the universal scorching ; and as pilgrimage was the freight, bigotry broke out like a pestilence on board. Mustapha listened, first with astorishment to the bitterness of men for opinions, and then with laughter at the absurdity of the opinions. He saw the Persian ready to take the Turk by the beard, and the Turk ready to return the insult by the poniard, for the question, which of two men who had died a thousand years ago was the true descendant of the prophet. "May the prophet spurn them both out of paradise," was his laughing exclamation ; "for the Shiite and the Sonnite would quarrel about the number of pearls in its pavement." Even while he was speaking, a furious battle arose in the fore-part of the ship. He was rushing towards it ; but the scribe pulled his robe, and he turned. "They," said the youth, "are two doctors of the mosque fighting." Mustapha stopped at once. He had no possible desire to interfere between such slippery personages as doctors of the mosque, and he returned his half-drawn scymetar into its sheath. But he had not far to follow the combatants, for one of them, a huge Arab of Medina, came running to the stern, dragging the other along by the neck, to throw him overboard. Mustapha's humanity instinctively made him grasp the defeated party, as he was on the point of being flung to the fishes. While with one hand he held up the unlucky combatant, and with the other kept his vanquisher at bay, he asked, what could have been the cause of this mortal hatred ? — "Ask the villain whom you have barely kept from my murder," exclaimed the defeated Mollah. — "Does the miscreant dare to repeat his impious words," roared the man of Medina ; "I call every true Moslem to witness, as I call heaven and earth to avenge the crime, that he dared to doubt that the sacred camel which carried the prophet in the Hegira, was *white* !" — He could utter no more ; he stood choking with fury. — "Dared to doubt it ?" exclaimed his rescued antagonist ; "I never doubted, for an instant, on the subject. I said, and say, that the sacred camel was *black*. And, if that misbelieving slave's dagger were at my throat, I should say it still." the saying was unlucky, for in the effort to second his demonstration by a blow of a knife, hid in his sleeve, his foot slipped, and he fell under the very heels of his enemy. The Arab instantly rushed upon him, and before an arm could be raised for his protection, had hung him over the ship's side. Even Mustapha now shrank from advancing, for the Arab swore by the holy stone of Mecca, that, at his first step, he should see the heretic tossed into the sea. "But, to show that I under-

stand justice," he exclaimed; "I shall give the wretch one chance more: — Achmet Ben Saddai, son of an evil mother, do you acknowledge that the camel was white!" — "Black," was the outcry in answer; "ay, black as midnight!" — Then, down to Satanai!" shouted the Arab, attempting to fling him into the waves: but the Mollah would not be shaken off; he clung to him with the nerve of death; and the struggle was fierce, until the Arab uttered a scream of agony, and both plunged out of sight together. On their rising to the surface, the Mollah was seen dead, strangled by the grasp of his powerful fellow disputant. The Arab was dying; his broad chest displayed a mortal wound, which the Mollah had contrived to give him, at the close of the struggle, as a final specimen of his skill in the art of controversy. A boat was ordered to be let down to recover their remains; but the sailorship of the Mediterranean is tardy, and in the mean time the disputants were taken possession of by more interested activity. A couple of sharks had continued eyeing the struggle at the ship's side, in fair expectation of the consequences. They now pounced on both the doctors, swept them through surges, whose foam they soon turned red, and left the merits of the black and white camels to be settled by posterity.

"Well," said Mustapha, gravely, as the wrecks of those unfortunates disappeared; "I hope the rest of our disputants will be taught by their example?" —

"When," said the Scribe; "were fools ever taught by example?"

He was in the right. The controversy spread through the ship, until the pilgrims would neither eat nor drink with each other. Fortunate for them if they had been deaf; still more fortunate for them if they had been dumb. Every man had a different opinion, and every man disputed in its honour as if it were necessary to his existence. The colour of the camel branched into a hundred controversies, and each made at least a pair of orators ready to strangle each other.

Mustapha, irritated and impatient, at last proposed to the Scribe that they both should go among them; and, explaining the absurdity of their quarrelling on points for which no human being could be the better or the worse, recommend them to pass, at least, the remainder of the voyage in peace. "Are we strong enough," said the Scribe, simply, "to throw one half of them overboard every day, until but you and I are left?" — "No," replied the Bey: "but they must be tired of fighting, by this time." — "Nonsense is indefatigable," observed his companion. "But," said the Bey, "I shall rebut their nonsense, satisfy their reason, and compel the fools to see that nothing but mutual concession can ever produce either general comfort, or general safety." — "Try," briefly said the Scribe.

Next morning, when the war of words was at its height and the deck was covered with knots of enthusiasts, all descanting on their own wisdom, and the folly of the whole human race besides, — Mustapha came forward with his proposition for laying aside all quarrels on creeds during the voyage. His figure, lofty and commanding, his fine countenance, and even his embroidered robes, and jewelled weapons, had a powerful effect on the bystanders; the pilgrims paused in their disputes, and all, forming a circle round the glittering preacher of peace, declared their readiness to adopt any plan which he thought fit to offer. Mustapha, elated at the prospect of success, spoke long and eloquently; the man of genius broke out through the habits of the Osmanli, and all his audience were enraptured. Shouts of approval soon began to follow every sentence: he spoke of the original fraternity of mankind, and was applauded; of the dignity of truth, the supremacy of conscience, and the purity of reason, — and was applauded still more: he then powerfully described them as combined in the act of exhibiting to others the same freedom which we claim for ourselves; and in remembering, among all the differences of opinion, that the man who possesses

a spirit of good will for his fellow men, holds the master key of all the virtues. An uproar of admiration followed the speech; and the whole circle cried out that neither Stamboul nor Smyrna could produce his equal. He next proposed that every man should come forward, and pledge himself to general harmony: A tall Turk instantly advanced. — "Illustrious Sonnite," he began his declaration — "Illustrious Sonnite!" exclaimed a dwarfish, but richly clothed Persian; "why, son of a blind father and a deaf mother, who told you that he was a Sonnite? All the genius and virtue of mankind are with the children of Ali." A blow with the slipper of a disciple of Omar told the Persian that his opinion might not be universal. Mustapha saw his project broken up at once, and came forward to restore peace. But the tide had turned; and he himself was assailed by enquiries into his faith. "Do you believe in the holy waters of the Zemzem?" cried one. — "If you do not worship the foot of Fo," cried another, "we only insult our ears in listening to you!" — "Do you twist three hairs of the holy cow's tail of the Hedjaz, round your turban?" screamed another. — "Do you believe in Boodh?" was the outcry of a fourth. The clamour grew horrible. — "By the print of Adam's slipper!" yelled a gigantic Ceylonese, "the fellow is nothing better than a spy; and he deserves to be impaled on the spot." "By the knees of my fathers, he is a heretic," howled a ferocious Malay; "I would rather drink his blood than a bowl of arrack!" All now became clamour and confusion: daggers, knives, scymetars, and ataghans, flashed round the throat of the unlucky Mustapha. But he was bold, was master of his weapon, and the sight of the naked poniard in one hand, and his scymetar wheeling round his head in the other, partially repelled the furious crowd. "Hear me, madmen!" he exclaimed. "Can I believe all your creeds together?" — "You believe none!" was the roar: and they pressed closer on him. — "I believe all that reason tells me to believe," was his daring reply; "but this too I believe, that all opinions have something in them *right*." The sentiment was partially applauded. "And also," added he, "something in them *wrong*." This was oil on flame; the whole crowd burst into rage; they rushed upon him in a body: he struggled desperately, but a blow from behind struck the scymetar from his hand. He glanced round, and saw the Malay at his back, with his knees uplifted to strike a mortal blow. In the next instant he saw the countenance of the savage convulsed, heard him shriek, and felt him falling at his feet. In the place of the Malay stood the young Scribe, with the dagger in his hand, which he had snatched from the ruffian in the moment of fate; and had dyed in his heart's blood. Mustapha cast a look of thanks at his preserver; and side by side they retreated to the poop, where the pilgrims dared not approach them. But the fire-arms in the cabin were soon in the hands of his assailants, and certain death seemed to await him and his young companion. In this emergency, Mustapha prepared to die: but the Scribe, repeating the famous lines of Amrou, at the battle of Ternaara —

"The eagle takes an eagle's flight,
The hero must not die in night:"

sprang on the deck before him; and making a sign of parley, proposed at once that they should leave the ship to the pilgrims, and be set on the first shore they saw. Mustapha's blood boiled at the idea of compromise. But his preserver was already in the midst of the infuriated crowd, and he felt that hesitation might cost that preserver his life. He complied, with bitterness of soul. The boat was hoisted out, and the two exiles were rowed in the direction of the coast. They soon saw the hills above Beyrout; and trod the famous soil of Palestine. "And this comes of preaching peace to pilgrims," said Mustapha, indignantly, as he looked on the parched and ruined face of the country round him. "This is my last experiment: may

the Arabs pluck out their beards! But we run the greatest possible chance of being starved."

"My lord, may you be happy," said the Scribe; "but if we had remained on board, we should only have added to the possibility of being starved the probability of being drowned, or something not very far from the certainty of being shot."

"But to be thrown into this place of desolation for the mere attempt to prevent a parcel of hotheaded bigots from cutting each others heads off!" angrily murmured the Bey.

"The man who attempts to drive back the ocean when it rises before the gale, will find that his labour is wasted, even if he escape being sent to the bottom. He should take it in the calm."

"But, that such follies and furies should have their origin in religion!" retorted the Bey.

"Look on that Heaven," said the young Scribe. And well might they look on that Heaven with delight and wonder. Ten thousand stars blazed above their heads, with a pure intensity of light, an essential glory, to which Mustapha had never seen the equal even in the serene skies of Asia Minor. The sky was showered with stars, a shower of diamond. A few faint clouds, slightly tinged with the last hues of evening, lingered on the western horizon, like the last incense from some mighty altar. The air was still, and breathing the odour of the sheets of wild jessamines and myrtle which clothed the sides of the mountains; all was richness, solemn splendour, and sacred repose. The vivid eye of the Bey, made to rejoice in all that filled the imagination, roved over the boundless field of the stars of Heaven with a delight which kept him silent.

"From that sky," said the youth, "which looks one vast palace of holy tranquillity, from this fragrant air, which breaths like an offering of all the treasures of nature to the Sovereign of Nature, descend the thunder and the tempest, the bolt that strikes the mountain pinnacles into dust, and the hurricane that swells the sea into destruction. And shall we wonder that religion, bright, holy, and boundless as those skies, should have power, from time to time, to fill the earth with terror, to dazzle the weak, to overwhelm the bewildered, to give an irresistible impulse to all that is bold, imaginative, untameable, and soaring, in the heart of man."

"But what has the dagger, or the pistol, to do with this impulse? yet those sticklers for their contradictory follies would have flung me to the sharks which carried off the doctors of the black and white camels."

The young scribe smiled, and simply said, "My lord, while nine-tenths of mankind are fools, why were we to expect that our pilgrim ship contained none but sages. While all mankind are creatures of the passions, why were we to suppose that a crew of enthusiasts alone were incapable of being frenzied by scorn. But let us not lay the blame on religion. To produce great effects, we must find great powers. Where universal man is to be stirred, the evil will be stirred with the good. But if the Nile, when it pours down its flood of fertility on the burning soil of the Delta, brings weeds into life with the harvest, is the fault in the Nile? Or when the mighty orb that has but just finished his course of glory in yonder waves, rises to circle the world with light and life, are we to extinguish his beams, through fear of the insects which he quickens in the marsh and the wilderness?" The young speaker of these words had been roused by the subject in a unusual fervour. His pale countenance had suddenly lighted up, and as he gazed on the firmament, unconscious of all things but the glory which had awoke his feelings, the Bey found it impossible to withdraw his eyes from its animated beauty. The expressive features flushed with new intelligence. The glance, always powerful, seemed to catch new brilliancy from the splendours above. Even the voice seemed to be changed. Always sweet, it was now lofty and solemn, yet it touched the spirit of the

bearer more than in its softest moments. It was once music to his ear; it was now conviction to his soul. The haughty warrior, the proud philosopher, the conscious superior of every mind that he had till now encountered, all gave way; and, flinging himself on the neck of his friend, Mustapha pledged himself by every light blazing in that sky of serenity never to part from his young sage, his counsellor, the tamer of his follies, and the guide of his existence.

The Scribe suddenly disengaged himself from this impetuous instance of friendship, and with one struggling hand still held in the grasp of Mustapha, and the other pressed closely to his forehead, turned away in silence. "Hear me now," said the impatient Bey, "once for all; I abandon all eagerness to interfere in other men's concerns. This voyage, this hour, have given me wisdom worth a life. And if ever Mustapha Ben Mustapha troubles his brain about making fools wiser than nature intended them to be; about giving experience to slaves incapable of thought; or teaching toleration to traders in bigotry; may he go the way of the doctors; or worse, may he be parted from his first and last of friends, even from his young philosopher." The young philosopher answered this burst of sentiment only with one of his quiet smiles, and drawing his turban still deeper on his brows, and wrapping his mantle closer round him, remarked, that the night was at hand, and that some village should be sought for, where they might find shelter and entertainment. Mustapha, in the ardour of the moment, would have despised the aid of man, and remained gazing on the stars, and listening to the wisdom of his companion. But a gust from the sea, followed by the rising roar of thunder among the hills, awoke him to the realities of the wilderness; and, anxious for the safety of so fragile a frame as that of his fellow traveller, he followed the sounds of the baying of dogs, and an occasional blast of a horn which sounded on the night air, until he found himself suddenly called on to stop. He was in the front of a troop of Arab horsemen. "Fly, or surrender at once," whispered the Scribe. "The panther is lord in the desert."

"The lion never flies," was the bold exclamation of the Bey, as he drew his scymetar. The Arabs seeing the flash, returned it by a general fire of their muskets, and rushing on in the smoke, to their astonishment, they found that instead of a troop of some hostile tribe, they had but a single enemy, the handsomest of Moslem, who still defied them. They burst out into laughter at his presumption, and at the same moment a dozen fellows leaped from their horses, and threw themselves upon him. He struggled desperately, but a feeble voice reached his ear, which totally unmanned him. By the gleam of a torch he saw his friend in the hands of a crowd of the Arabs, who were carrying him away; and to his still deeper terror, he saw a long line of blood trickling from beneath his turban. He felt himself instantly powerless, and flinging away his weapon, yielded at once. The captives were carried in triumph to the camp; where Mustapha's jewels were infinitely admired, and plundered to the last stone. But his true sorrow was for the sufferings of his wounded friend; the Bey was inconsolable for the misfortune, which he attributed entirely to his own rashness. "Well was it said by Hafiz," he exclaimed in bitterness, "that he who takes the wolf by the throat, should first see that his tusks are plucked out." The young Scribe pointed with his slight finger upward, and said with a faint smile. "The skies are as bright above this tent, as they were on the sea-shore. The sun will rise tomorrow, as he rose yesterday. We are in hands stronger than the hands of the Arab. The first refuge of the fearful, but the last refuge of the brave, is despair."

The tribe moved to another pasturage, and they carried their prisoners along with them. To Mustapha, the Karamanian lord, this life of hardship would once have been intolerable. Where were his slaves, his banquets, his minstrels, his baths, his perfumes? He saw round him nothing but the

horsehair curtains of his tent, and beyond them the sands of the wilderness. His food was herbs, his perfumes were the wild breath of the desert shrubs, his companions were the Bedoween. Yet, what is man but the child of circumstance! He had abjured all his luxuries, for he had found them insufficient to fill up the aching void of his mind. He now had health, exercise, and an object. The bravery of his defence had extorted the applause of the Arabs; his noble figure, commanding countenance, and matchless dexterity in arms, had soon equally forced their admiration. They gave him a new name in their expeditions; he was the 'Leopard,' and their sheik finally crowned the homage of the tribe, by the offer of his only child, the gazelle-eyed Ayesha; with a thousand sheep and a hundred camels as a dowry. The prospect was enough to turn the brain of any young hero of the desert. The husband of the fair Ayesha must succeed to the headship of the tribe, — two thousand horsemen of the Beni Kohlani, masters of the finest pastures, renowned for the fleetest horses, and still more renowned for having baffled the pashas of Syria, in every encounter, for the last hundred years. The Bey went to the tent of his young counsellor, who was now rapidly recovering from the effects of the Arab musquet. He communicated the generous proposal.

"It offers all that a warrior can desire," was the reply.

"But I have forsworn the warrior," was the answer.

"It offers much that the man of ambition might covet," said the Scribe.

"But I have abandoned all that bears the name of ambition," said the Bey.

"But it offers something to the eye," said the Scribe; "for the daughter of the sheik is among the handsomest of the Bedoween. But the true question is, what it offers to the heart?"

The speaker pronounced the words in a low tone, and remained evidently waiting an answer.

"I have tenfold forsworn that folly," said Mustapha, impatiently; "the heart is not concerned in the marriages of the Moslem." There was silence for a time. At length the Bey added, "but, my friend, the judge who is to decide on my case, should know all. I never saw the face of woman, that I thought of a second moment, — but one."

"The name of that one?" asked the Scribe, with a tone which seemed to borrow some of its impatience from the Bey.

"I know not," was the answer.

The listener had taken a cup of sherbet from the attendant, and was tasting it with his parched lips, when the enquiries of Mustapha arrested his hand.

"Is she yet among the living?" asked he.

Still, "I know not," was the answer. "She was seen but for a moment. Yet, her beauty has haunted me to this hour. Many a long day it made me restless and wretched. I sought her, but in vain. It may have been among the causes which made me the being I am, the slave of impulses, full of the fever of the mind, always rash, always repentant; a wanderer, a visionary, a madman." He covered his forehead with his hands, and struggled evidently with strong emotion. "But," added he, "I now speak of those things for the last time. On my march to Constantinople at the head of my cavalry, as we encamped on the plain bordering the Bosphorus, our position was accidentally crossed by a train from the seraglio. My troopers were wild fellows, and, unacquainted with the forms of state, they broke loose and galloped up to the procession. This produced a cry of horror from the attendants, and the startled camels ran away with their burdens. One of their little tents was overthrown at my feet, and from it I raised the loveliest being that the eye of man ever gazed on. She was fainting, and for the moment I looked unrestrained on beauty worthy of Paradise. But the attendants soon came up; nothing but the threats of my horsemen prevented my instantly falling by the hands of the janizaries;

the tent was replaced upon the camel, and a vision departed from my eyes that to this hour has shut out every other from my heart."

Mustapha, as he uttered the words, rushed from the tent; sprang upon his steed, and, galloped for leagues into the depths of the desert, to recover his tranquillity. On his return, he found the tribe preparing to march to the attack of the great caravan from Tripoli. He marched with it, distinguished himself at the head of a chosen troop in a night assault, in which he took the Pasha of Sidon prisoner, and returned with the greatest prize of Syrian corn that had ever graced the annals of plunder.

All the tribe lauded him to the skies; the warriors were in raptures; and every woman was instantly busied at the corn mill. Mustapha went out to view them in their occupation; but his eye was instantly struck by the coarseness of the national contrivance. He found five hundred women doing with the old hand-mill less work than with a little ingenuity might be done with a hundredth part of the labour and the time. "With wind, canvas, and wood, any thing," said he, "may be done." His invention was instantly active, and in a few days he gave a model for the construction of a mill, which worked wonders. The women were delighted to get rid of the trouble; the Sheik was delighted to eat bread which was not half stone; and all were delighted at the genius which had raised in the midst of their tribe, a machine requiring nothing but a blast of wind, to make it go on grinding till doomsday. The women, determined to escape the drudgery for the future, instantly broke every hand-mill that they could find; and Mustapha was at the height of popularity.

The new machine became famous before the week was at an end. But fame excites envy, and envy is the worst of peace-makers. The Beni Abubecker, one of the most powerful tribes of the Hauran, had heard of this extraordinary invention, and resolved either to seize it, or destroy a work which promised to turn the mill-wheel into the philosopher's stone. They moved in great force against the Beni Kohlani. A battle followed, desperately contested, in which Mustapha again distinguished himself. But the rumour had now reached as far as the coasts of the Red Sea; tribe on tribe were mustering to seize this mighty structure, which was said to be the work of magic,—a secret wrung directly from the lips of the golden image of Solomon. A council of war was held, in which it was resolved to fly that night from this overwhelming superiority. But, what was to be done with the great structure that towered above all their tents. To carry it away was impossible in the rapid march of the tribe; to leave it was disgrace. It was therefore to be burned. The tribe marched at twilight, and its flame lighted them many a league over the plain. They at length halted, and the provisions were to be prepared. But the confusion was now universal. Even the old hand-mills would have been better than none. The tribe rushed round the tent of Mustapha, assailing him by every name of guilt, for having bewitched them, first into war with all their neighbours, and next, into eating corn unground; an insult worthy of the magician's blood. The Bey was thunderstruck. He almost tore his beard in vexation. "Yet," he exclaimed, "it is not these savages that I blame, so much as the fool who could not leave them to their own wits. By Allah, I deserve to die by the needles of the women, for the absurdity of thinking that the present generation could not manage to live, eating grit in their meal, as well as their forefathers did." But his wisdom was now too late. A guard who had supped on unground corn were placed upon the tent, and he was ordered for public execution at day-break.

An hour after midnight, he was awakened by the sound of a knife cutting through the back of the tent. The young Scribe had thus made his way to him.

"Have you?" said he, "at last resolved to leave the world to be wise in its own good time?" Mustapha lifted his eyes and hands to heaven. "Have

you," continued the interrogator, "resolved never to think of teaching the knowledge of men to children? Have you resolved to try what is good in the old, before you hurry on to the new? One question more,—have you resolved to give up the honours of a sheik's son-in-law, and never to wed till you see once again the vision of the Bosphorus?"

Mustapha sprang from his seat at the words. Three horses were piquetted in rear of the tent. On one of them was already mounted the captive pasha of Sidon, who acted as their guide; and the fugitives were soon far from the camp of the Beni Kohlani. At the dawn they were galloping along the shore; a ship was off the coast; they hailed it, and found themselves in the Venetian vessel which had brought the pilgrims. To Mustapha's enquiry as to his converts, the answer was, "that they had never quarrelled, from the day he had ceased the attempt to reconcile them."

The vessel dropped anchor in the gulph of Macri, and Mustapha viewed the shore of Asia with immeasurable longing. The young Scribe divined his emotions, and said, "My lord, you must return to your country, and take the station your birth, feelings, and talents, mark for your own."

"No! my inheritance is now in the hand of another," said Mustapha bitterly; "the sword of my fathers is rusted in the sheath of their son. We must find some lonely hill, or unknown hermitage, and die together."

"Never!" exclaimed the Scribe. "The daughter of the Sultan was not made to be his follower whom she could not honour as her husband."

As the words were uttered, the slight hand was raised to the forehead, and the deep turban which had so long shaded the countenance was thrown back. Mustapha started with a cry of astonishment. The vision of the Bosphorus stood before him—Sherene, the daughter of the king of kings of the east. With many a blush and many a sigh the lovely being told the tale of her overcharged heart. She had never forgotten the noble aspect of the chieftain whom she had seen on the plains of Scutari. The agony of knowing that his generous spirit was exposed to the jealousies of a Turkish cabinet, still more than to the hazards of war, drove her to the wild expedient of following him to his dungeon. She had, from that hour, been his guardian angel. His lesson of life was now fully given; his impetuosity was transmuted into forethought, and his precipitate zeal to change all the world for the better, into the enquiry how to make the best of it as it is.

On this evening his eye fell accidentally on the emerald signet, which, in memory of his father, he had retained in all his vicissitudes. To his utter astonishment, the cloudly surface was brilliantly clear, and the characters shone like flashes of lightning. He read on the signet the words,

"For all things there is a time.
Indolence is behind the time.
Rashness is before the time.
Wisdom waits the time."

Sherene was at his side while he read the mystery. As he looked up in her fine countenance illumined by the sudden splendour of the talisman, he thought that he had never seen loveliness before. The cheek suffused with rose, and the magnificent eye, looked to him like the evening star shining in the sunset. "The vision of the Bosphorus is forgotten," he exclaimed, gazing on her with the rapt glance of a worshipper. The princess gave an involuntary start, and her lip grew pale. "Forgotten," exclaimed the lover,—"but it is, in the presence of an hour!" A tear of delight glittered in her eye, the cheek was burning crimson again, she fell on his neck, and in that sacred embrace they pledged those vows which are not to be dissolved by the power of man.

The Bey had found the true motive for action. He flew to his province; his vassals received him with universal acclamation. All opposition per-

ished before their triumph at seeing the heroic son of their old prince among them again. But their wonder was his bride, the princess Sherene Halibi. They honoured her unequalled loveliness; but they worshipped her benevolence, the loftiness of her genius, and the purity of her virtue. In the midst of the bridal, the Tartar of the court galloped up to the palace. He bore on his head the firmaun of the Sublime Porte, giving the paternal benediction, and appointing the Bey to the Pachalic of the great province of Karamania.

R. S. E.

THE ROMANCE OF LOVE.

BY JAMES AUGUSTUS ST. JOHN.

[From "*The Friendship's Offering*," for 1835.]

"Who ever loved, that loved not at first sight?"—*As You Like It*.

In the autumn of the year 1792, a respectable looking woman, about twenty-two years of age, dressed in widow's weeds, and having an infant on her lap, arrived in a return chaise at the little town of Llandilovawr, in South Wales. In the course of a fortnight, she had succeeded in taking and furnishing, to the best of her power, a small cottage in the outskirts of the town, where, as she confessed to her inquisitive neighbours, she intended to remain for life. Though her manners, and even her dress, denoted her to belong to the respectable classes of society, her means of subsistence were evidently scanty; for, very soon after her arrival, she caused it to be understood that she intended to take in plain needle-work, in order to eke out her small independence.

Her name, she said, was Waters; that of her infant boy, Arundel; but in fondling with her child some of the curious gossips, who would occasionally visit her, imagined they heard her mutter some other name, which, however, they could never catch distinctly. Be this as it may, she doted on the boy, and often, as she pressed him to her bosom, tears of mingled bitterness and delight would fill her large dark eyes, and trickle down over her pale cheeks.

Years passed on, and Arundel successively passed through the stages of childhood and boyhood, and was now entering upon that of youth. From the cradle he had been remarkable for the beauty of his countenance, but still more, perhaps, for a certain wayward, dauntless manner, which at first offended, but generally ended in conciliating and delighting his companions. He never kept aloof, as some clever boys do, from the other urchins of the place, but threw himself heart and soul, into all their amusements, in which, by the earnestness and force of his character, he was mostly the chosen leader. He swam in the Towy, climbed, wrestled, fought, with the best of them. In fact, as his strength and his years increased, his animal spirits appeared to boil over too fiercely, and his manners acquired a haughty domineering tone, corresponding but ill with the humbleness of his condition.

When, however, he had escaped from boyhood, and was entering, as I have said, upon the threshold of youth, his manners changed suddenly; he became meditative, lonely, studious, and the youths of the village were no longer his companions. In fact, he began, he knew not wherefore, to hunger and thirst after renown, and to nourish in the depths of his soul the belief

that there was yet a vacant niche in the temple of glory, which fate had reserved for him. He soon perceived by that happy intuition which belongs to genius, that labour and patience are the only weapons which render man invincible in the warfare of reputation; and endeavoured by a thousand trials to inure himself to those habits which by degrees transform us into what we would become. His only counsellor now was his mother; and, instead of repressing his ardour, she is thought to have fostered and inflamed it, by telling him that to be ignorant is to be a slave, that knowledge is power, and that genius eventually subdues every thing to itself. Frequently the mother and her son would sit up through half the night, conferring on the means by which fame and fortune might be achieved; and it was at length determined that Arundel should be a painter.

The hands by whose labour his life had hitherto been sustained now taught Arundel the first rudiments of drawing; for Mrs. Waters possessed many of the accomplishments of a lady; and the boy's first achievement of any promise was his mother's portrait. There is something inexpressibly tender and holy in the affection of a son for his mother; and Arundel, in whose soul every high and noble sentiment had been implanted by nature, appeared to enjoy a religious pleasure in reproducing the maternal features upon canvass; a pleasure which might, perhaps, be somewhat heightened by the circumstance that those features still exhibited something more than the remains of beauty, together with a degree of matronly dignity, which, in any but a mother's face, would have seemed rather to deserve the name of severity.

However, by constantly studying his mother's countenance, and painting it over and over a thousand times, Arundel acquired some little skill in portrait painting; and it began at length to be whispered about that the boy's pencil did not flatter amiss. The young ladies of the neighbourhood now took additional notice of the widow and her son; though, to do them justice, they had never treated them contumeliously; and first one and then another had her likeness taken, for which the young artist received some little money, and a great deal of praise.

The house, dress, and appearance of Mrs. Waters now began to assume a superior air; and Arundel himself, though still poor enough, dressed and conducted himself like a gentleman. He proceeded thus studying and improving until he had entered his nineteenth year, when an event happened which disturbed the smooth current of his life, and seemed likely to cloud for ever the atmosphere of his glory. Like all persons of ardent poetical temperament, our portrait-painter was deeply imbued with religious feelings; and although seldom or never accompanied by his mother, was regular in his attendance at church, and in his visits to the Vicar, who, childless himself, began to regard him as his son, and would always speak of him among his parishioners as his "dear boy."

One Sunday, in the midst of summer, a strange carriage drove up to the church-door, a few minutes before the service had commenced; and presently after a gentleman with two ladies, apparently his wife and daughter, entered the sacred building, and were shown into the seat directly under the pulpit. Those who occupied this seat sat with their backs to the preacher and their faces turned towards the congregation; and when the strangers were seated, Arundel, who happened to be in the next seat, lifted up his head and stole a glance at them. The young lady might be about sixteen, but was womanly beyond her age, and of singular beauty. Her eyes were brilliantly blue, her complexion the fairest of the fair, her hair dark auburn, which the rays of the sun, as they fell upon it, seemed to kindle into living gold. For the first time in his life Arundel was inattentive to the word of God. Rapt in a kind of trance, he fixed his eyes on the face of the young lady with a degree of earnestness which at first made her turn away, then bluish, then feel angry. He was, however, for some time unconscious of

what he was doing; but at length perceiving her reddening cheeks and forehead, he blushed heartily in his turn, and leaned his head upon his hands to conceal his emotion. He now seemed as if he had tasted of some mysterious potion, capable of steeping the soul in the most brilliant and delicious dreams, or rather, perhaps, of awakening it from a state of lethargy to a consciousness of real existence.

A considerable time before the service was concluded the old gentleman, unmindful of decorum, or pressed by some urgent engagement, pulled out his watch, and appearing as if he had stayed beyond his time, hurried his family out of the church; and in another minute Arundel, who was debating with himself whether he should follow them or not, heard the cracking of the coachman's whip, and the rattling of the carriage-wheels upon the pebbled road. He made no doubt, however, that they would stop at least some hours in the town; and the instant the sermon was over, ran off to the inn, there being but one in the place, to inquire about them. To his infinite sorrow he learned from the ostler, a sort of animal which never goes to church, or imagines it has a soul, that the "gem'man" had not even stayed to drink one glass of ale, but hastened on towards the next town. To this place, which was only nine miles distant, Arundel at once proceeded, not so much in the hope of seeing his beloved unknown, as of learning the name of the family; but when he arrived, he was informed that a strange carriage had indeed passed through some hours before, but without stopping; and of the numerous roads which thence branched off in different directions, no body could tell which it had taken.

Nothing was now left but to retrace his footsteps. He arrived early in the evening, and to the almost reproachful inquiries of his mother, who had been alarmed at his not returning at the usual hour from church, he replied by giving the true history of his little expedition. She appeared to be rather surprised than angry at his conduct; and her only remark was that he had now an additional motive for exertion, for that assuredly if he should ever again meet the lady, it would be to no purpose, unless he possessed either riches, or a name to put in the balance against her fortune, it being scarcely to be doubted that she was wealthy.

Arundel had already acquired what might in the country be termed a reputation, and had begun, even before the above adventure, to turn his thoughts towards London, the magnet which attracts all high and daring spirits in the empire; and now his desire to mingle among the crowds of that glorious city amounted to a passion. At length he ventured to disclose his ambitious project to his mother, who, bursting into a flood of tears at the bitter thought of separation, after weeping in silence for some time, consented. "Go, my boy," said she: "I have nursed thee, and watched over thee for this. I shall sit here contented in this cot, listening to the echoes of thy fame, which will reach me like sweet music, and console me in poverty, in sickness, in old age, ay, even in death, my son! for I know that, whatever may be thy fate, thou wilt crave and deserve thy mother's blessing!" The young man's heart was too full for words; but after a moment's pause he sobbed out some expressions of gratitude and affection; and in a few days was on his way towards the capital, with his little fortune in a knapsack on his back.

On his arrival in London, Arundel, who in his heart had the ambition to distinguish himself in the higher walks of art, applied with unabating assiduity to his portrait painting, and soon began to be celebrated for his power, delicacy, and skill in delineating female loveliness; but in reality he greatly flattered all those he painted, for the image of his beautiful unknown, which had taken total possession of his heart, overflowed upon the canvass, and mingled itself with the graces of inferior countenances. Meanwhile, the young artist, who never ceased to hope that some happy walls within the circumference of this huge capital, contained the person of his beloved,

frequented every public place where it was likely she might be seen ; and one night, from the pit of Covent Garden theatre, he thought he caught a glimpse of her in the dress-boxes a moment or two before the play was over ; but though he immediately hurried to the box entrance, and watched until long after every soul had quitted the theatre, he never saw her again. His gains were now considerable, and a very liberal proportion of them continually found their way to Llandilo ; but the mother at length checked this mode of expressing his gratitude, and reminded him that he was to aim at something beyond mere wealth. This memento came just in time to second the project he had conceived of making a journey into Italy, there to study at his leisure the remains of ancient art : a plan almost universally pursued by artists, though it can be of use only to those fortunate few upon whom nature has bestowed the glorious power of creating without models ; and who go, not to imitate, but to enjoy ; though their very enjoyment is productive.

Arundel took up his residence at Rome among the wrecks of antiquity : and his abstemious habits, making but small inroads upon his purse, promised to enable him to prolong his stay as long as might be judged necessary. He never relinquished, however, his profession of portrait-painter, though he exercised it less frequently ; and it was chiefly, if not entirely, for his own countrywomen, or their lovers, that his pencil was employed in this way. It should have been before remarked that immediately after seeing the beautiful unknown, in the little church of Llandilo, Arundel had painted her portrait from memory. This production he continually bore about with him, and retouched as his skill increased ; so that at last, whatever likeness it might bear to the original, it represented his *beau ideal* of female beauty, and was certainly an exquisite picture.

Among the English who put Arundel's talents in requisition, there was one young gentleman, about seventeen, who, having seen two or three specimens of his skill, came to have his own portrait taken. He was travelling with his tutor, and meant to make a long stay at Rome. From their first meeting, a species of instinctive attachment took place between the painter and this youth, which increased with their acquaintance, and promised to ripen into a lasting friendship. However, as often as Arundel took up his pencil to proceed with his young friend's portrait, a sensation of mingled pleasure and pain shot through his frame, and caused his heart to leap, and his brain to become dizzy for a moment ; but delight quickly prevailed ; and upon the whole, he never was so happy as when employed upon the portrait of Arthur Pevensey, which was the name of the youth.

Pevensey's tutor, who had never before been at Rome, and was not very cautious, or conversant with the *locale* of the place, had unluckily taken lodgings in a quarter of the city which had recently been reached by the *mal'aria* ; that growing plague which must in the end depopulate the eternal city. It could not be expected that the boy should be much wiser than his tutor ; and to complete the effect of the latter's imprudence, one night, to temper the intolerable heat of the weather, he threw open his bed-room windows, and went to sleep. In the morning he awoke in a raging fever, and the physicians, both Italian and English, declared to the unhappy guardian of the youth, that his life was in the most imminent danger. The news was immediately conveyed to the painter, who hastened to the spot, and found his young friend delirious. Observing the awkwardness, not to say stupidity, of the tutor, and distrusting the care of hired attendants, Arundel resolved to remain until all should be over, whether for good or bad ; and having more than once watched beside his mother's couch during illness, he was not inexperienced in a sick chamber. For many an hour he hung with more than a brother's affection over the unconscious boy ; and when reason at length returned, and Pevensey could express his gratitude, he vowed that whatever might betide him, his friendship for Arundel was

there should be as lasting as his existence. It was while sitting by the sick-bed of the youth, watching his countenance during slumber, or in those moments of lassitude which succeed severe pain, when something inexpressibly lovely and feminine seemed to be diffused over his features, that the painter detected the cause of the sudden affection he had conceived for him; he strongly resembled the girl whom Arundel had seen in the church, or at least that image of her which remained, if I may so speak, upon the retina of his fancy.

As Pevensey recovered, his friendship for Arundel every day grew stronger and stronger; and the latter, when he led him out during his convalescence to take the morning air, and viewed the faint blush of health flowing back into the cheeks it had so lately deserted, often thought he saw before his eyes the little seat beneath the pulpit, with that beautiful apparition in it, which formed the delight and the torture of his life. At these moments his eyes would fill with tears, and his whole frame would tremble and grow weaker than that of the invalid he attempted to support; but he took care never to explain the cause of his emotion. When Pevensey was sufficiently strong to renew the sittings, his portrait was resumed, and in process of time, finished.

By this time the friends were become inseparable; and, being desirous of seeing the Virgin city, Parthenope, and its beautiful bay, they departed from Rome, and arrived, without a single adventure, at Naples. Here they obtained the tutor's permission to visit together the ruins of Pæstum, and leaving the worthy clergyman in the capital, proceeded towards the Etruscan city. Extending their ramble into the interior, farther than they originally intended, they explored the recesses of the Apennines; and at length arrived at the romantic little town, or rather village of Muro, in the vicinity of which there is a landscape unrivalled in all Italy for beauty, but seldom visited on account of the banditti who infest the roots of the mountains, and sometimes murder or carry into captivity the hardy travellers that set them at defiance.

For a painter, however, enamoured of the picturesque, the scene possesses charms sufficient to throw all slight apprehensions of danger into the back ground. It is a mute pastoral, sunny and tranquil as the poetical vales traversed by the Ladon or the Alpheus. Standing in the mouth of an elevated vale, bordered on either side with woods, beautified by classical ruins, and enlivened by groups of shepherdesses and wild goats, — you look down in rapture upon a lovely stream, here expanding into diminutive lakes, surrounded by umbrageous shores; anon contracting its width, and, spanned by bridges, rolling its shining waters between sylvan banks, dotted with towers, churches, and villas; and reflecting from its glassy surface, the varied forms of the surrounding mountains. Strips of forest, or straggling lines of detached trees, in some places run along the edge of the cliffs, or, springing forth boldly from small fissures in their precipitous sides, hang waving over the waters below. Elsewhere, the upland slopes feathered with tall graceful shrubs, which at the proper season of the year are clothed with odoriferous blossoms, lead to a succession of naked crags, or hungry table-land, the abode of the wild-goat and the eagle. But what words can paint the blue transparent brightness of the sky that stretches over the landscape at noon; or the world of gold and crimson clouds which dawn or sunset piles upon those serene interminable fields of azure! Arundel and Pevensey, who sat down among the shepherdesses to contemplate at leisure its incomparable beauties, appeared, as they regarded it, to be transported back to those patriarchal ages and eastern climes, where the imagination delights to establish its most brilliant creations.

Returning in the evening towards Muro, after a long day's ramble in the mountains, our adventurers were surrounded by a troop of robbers, who knocked them from their mules, upon which all their baggage was stowed,

and binding their hands behind their back, proceeded to examine their booty. Among Arundel's effects there was one small roll of canvass, which he appeared to value above all the rest; this he pointed at with his foot, his hands being confined, and earnestly entreated the gang to restore to him. For some moments they took no heed of what he said, but one of them being about to throw it with the other baggage into a sack, his whole frame became convulsed by agony, and with vehement prayers and tears he conjured them to restore it to him. "Let us see," said one of the ruffians, "what the madman makes all this clamour about;" and forthwith untied and unrolled the canvass upon the grass. It was a lady's portrait, *the lady's* portrait, — and Arundel's soul sickened as he beheld the profane looks which they cast upon it. The moment Pevensey could catch a glimpse of the countenance between the bodies of the banditti, who appeared to crowd round it with extraordinary pleasure, he turned inquiringly towards his friend, and exclaimed — "My sister, Arundel?" At the same moment, the person who seemed to possess most authority among the gang, rolled up the canvass, and putting it under his arm, said; "I promise to return this to you, when you leave us, which however, will not be immediately: or, stay, you may have it this moment. There is no fear of your escaping." And at the word he cut with his sword the cord by which Arundel's hands were bound together, and, giving him the picture, commanded him and his companion to move on in the midst of the troop. Pevensey's arms being now also unbound, they walked along side by side.

The mystery of Arundel's life was at length about to be unfolded. Pevensey assured him, that the portrait was that of his only sister, now in her twentieth year, and, when he left England, unmarried; though his father, Sir William Pevensey, encouraged the addresses of a neighbouring baronet, of whose success, however, there was not much danger. To his question respecting the mode by which our hero became possessed of the picture, the reply was an ingenuous history of the whole affair; and this only tended to strengthen the affection, and enhance the respect which Pevensey already entertained for the young artist. The more they conversed upon the subject, the more Arundel was struck by the mysterious chain which seemed to bind together the events of his life, now, as it would appear, approaching the denouement: but whether the untying of the plot was to be unfortunate or happy, it was beyond his skill to foresee. He inclined, however, for many reasons towards the melancholy view of the question, far more so than when his love was totally unknown, when his imagination, though yearning to paint her as a queen, accommodated itself to his wishes, and represented her as the daughter of some honest country gentleman, who might not, perhaps, consider an artist of reputation, such as he expected to become, a bad match. He concealed his misgivings from Pevensey, because he knew that the enthusiastic and affectionate boy, hitherto untainted by the doctrines of the world, — which teach that the dignity of man consists in things external to the soul, — would scarcely be able to perceive the disparity between his friend and his sister, and might regard as unjust and injurious any suspicions which should be thrown out, respecting the father's, consent.

The friends were permitted by the banditti to entertain themselves on the way with whatever conversation they pleased; nor were they at all hurried in their movements, or otherwise roughly treated. It was considerably after sunset, however, when they arrived at their first halting-place, which was upon the margin of a lake, apparently surrounded by lofty mountains, and the extent of which the darkness of the night concealed from them. To the shrill whistle of one of the thieves, an answer like a faint echo of the sound was returned; and shortly afterwards a boat with many rowers was seen approaching the shore. Into this the prisoners were ordered to step, and the robbers following in silence, the boat pushed off,

and in less than a quarter of an hour glided smoothly in, between two jutting points of rock, to the foot of what appeared to be a fortress, built upon an insulated cluster of lofty crags, springing up perpendicularly from the lake. A steep flight of steps led from the water's edge to the tower above, and by this the whole party ascended, leaving the boat moored below.

Immediately on their entering the castle, they were introduced to a man who denominated himself the Governor, and whom Pevensy recognised to be a certain Count di Spinosa, in whose company he had more than once had the honour of dining at Rome. He took care, however, not to appear acquainted with the person of this illustrious robber; but during supper, which was particularly excellent, and served up in great style, — the wife of the chief presiding, — Spinosa suddenly recollected his guest, and without the least reluctance or embarrassment, exclaimed — “Ah! milord Pivensi, you are come to pay me a visit at my castle. You know it is the custom on the other side of the Mediterranean, never to approach a great man, a man in power, like myself, without a very handsome present, and I mean to introduce the practice on this side of the water. You understand me. I hope you are come well provided. Who is this milord, your companion?” In spite of circumstances, both Pevensy and Arundel laughed heartily at the consummate effrontery of their host, and Arundel replied — “You mistake the matter, Count. Every Englishman who travels is not a lord. Neither my companion, nor myself have that honour. He is, however, an independent gentleman, and I am a painter.” “A painter! ah, I understand you. All Englishmen are painters, or poets, or something of that sort, when they happen to visit me. But that, milord, will make no difference here. The amount of the present is fixed. If you have not the sum about you, as perhaps you may not, there will be no difficulty in forwarding a letter to Naples, to your banker. Meanwhile, you will be handsomely entertained here in my castle, which you may regard as entirely at your disposal.”

Arundel persisted most pertinaciously in denying his title to nobility, but in vain. The Count at first only laughed, but at length grew angry, and exclaimed with vehemence, — “By —! you are a lord. I am a lord myself, and ought to know a nobleman from one of the herd. You look like a lord, you speak like a lord, and, since you force me to be plain with you, you are as impudent as a lord! Ah! ah! It would, indeed, be a fine joke that I, who have been accustomed to receive presents from Englishmen for the last fifteen years, at least, should not know a lord from a painter!” Seeing himself thus ennobled past all doubt, Arundel smiled, and telling the Count that they could discuss these matters hereafter, turned the conversation into another channel.

The window of the chamber, where they were permitted to repose together, overlooked the broad expanse of the lake, upon which the rays of the moon, which had now risen, threw their silvery light, that danced and trembled, as it were, upon the restless waters. The mountains beyond rose in dark fantastic masses, the pinnacles of which only were irradiated by the moon-beams. Here the friends sat conversing upon the singularity of their position, and the curious character of their noble host and his associates, until the light of the morning swallowed up that of the moon, and shed a brightness, a warmth, and, if I may so speak, a vivacity over the landscape, which invincibly cheered their fancy, and rekindled and invigorated their hopes. Arundel, from whom a large sum of money, distinctly specified by the Count, was as peremptorily demanded as from Pevensy, now possessed not one farthing in the world, the governor's myrmidons having rifled him of all his property; but his friend next morning dispatched, by one of the thieves, a letter to his tutor, at Naples, requesting him to for-

ward to him at once an order for the sum demanded for both, payable upon their being delivered over, safe and sound, to their friends, on a certain spot named by the Count. The tutor, however, was a prudent man, and could by no means resolve to advance five hundred pounds, (so much being required for each,) for a mere stranger, as he now described Arundel Waters; though, of course, he could not hesitate for a moment to pay his pupil's ransom. The pupil, angry, and indignant at his refusal, despatched another letter, insisting upon his request being instantly complied with; but the tutor, upon whom the care of the cash had been conferred, became nettled in his turn, and stood upon his first ground. With the second reply, however, he forwarded to Pevensey a letter from his father, which when opened, threw the friends into utter despair. It informed them that the baronet above commemorated, having at length succeeded in subduing the reluctance or obstinacy of Helena, was to lead her to the altar on a certain day, by which time, Sir William trusted that Arthur and his tutor would be able to reach London, in order to be present at the ceremony. This intelligence operated differently upon the two friends. Pevensey stamped, paced up and down the apartment, and swore with rage. Arundel leaned upon the lofty window seat, and a cold, bitter, blighting feeling crept over his heart, which seemed to wither as it were, within him, as the early blossoms of spring are sometimes known to wither beneath the touch of the east wind. Now he began to believe that his spirit had hitherto been feeding upon dreams; that to see a woman, to love her, to worship her, to seek her up and down the world, to live for her alone, was not to possess a title to her heart. This title, opportunity, and the possession of money could alone bestow; and in the anguish of the moment, he cursed the day on which he was born, and the high, but fantastic hopes by which he had been all his life deluded. He counselled Pevensey to listen at once to his tutors's advice, to obey his father's orders, and leave him to his fate. His friend was grieved: "Arundel," said he, "all this is mere sullenness and absurdity. If I were to act as you advise, you would justly abhor and loathe me as a reptile. Did you run away from me at Rome, when this same tutor lodged me in the midst of pestilence, and I believe, before Heaven! would have left me to die in it. My friend, we leave this castle together, or we will perish together in its dungeons! With respect to my sister, all I can say is, that, if she marry the idiot whom she has so often scorned and ridiculed in my presence, you will be a fortunate man to miss her; and, for myself, she shall be unto me as an outcast and a stranger, by all the hopes of my soul!" All this was uttered too rapidly and vehemently, to allow Arundel time to prevent the solemn imprecation with which it concluded; but he put violence upon his feelings, and endeavoured calmly to convince his friend that it was best, under all circumstances, that he should be liberated as soon as possible; as, when time had convinced the Count that no money was to be expected, he would let him go; or, at all events, lower his demands; when Pevensey, at liberty among his friends, could easily furnish the sum. "Perhaps I might," replied the youth; "but I will not make the trial. I will this moment dispatch my determination to my tutor, and let him refuse my demand, at his peril!"

This letter was accordingly written and sent, but the courier returned without an answer, the tutor not being to be found. The anguish of mind which Arundel now endured was indescribable. Shut up in this distant prison, while another man, altogether unworthy, was about to possess himself of the object of his sudden, but intense and unabating love, without even the satisfaction of presenting himself before her, of pleading his own cause, and discovering whether or not she really owned the perfections bestowed by his passion upon the image of her which inhabited his mind, he seemed to be condemned to a doom worse than that of Tantalus. In the midst of his grief, the idea of effecting his escape occurred; and the plan, which at once

suggested itself to his mind, appeared altogether so feasible, that he almost regarded as miraculous the stupidity which had prevented his thinking of it before. This was, to cut their bed-clothes into strips, to form a ladder of them, to wrench, by their united strength, one of the bars out of the window, to drop into the lake, and swim across to the mainland. Pevensey considered the scheme admirable; and it was agreed that it should be attempted that very night.

As soon as it was dark, the sheets, counterpanes, &c., were converted into a ladder; but the inmates of the castle appeared to be peculiarly active that evening, and Arundel heard one of the bandits observe, in passing their door, that it was expected the boat would quickly return with fresh captives and booty, for that the usual signal of success had been made upon the shore. Now, then, was the moment, when the boat was absent, and pursuit, as they judged, impossible. They found no great difficulty in wrenching out the bar; and having fastened their ladder, and let it out through the window, Arundel insisted that Pevensey should descend first, so that if any alarm were given, he, at all events, might escape. It was a star-light night, and Arundel, leaning his body half out over the sill, saw the youth descend the ladder, until within about ten or twelve feet of the dark water, where he paused for a moment. "Why do you pause, Pevensey?" said he, speaking as low as possible.

"I am come to the end of the ladder," he replied, "and am still a great way from the water."

"Drop down at once," said Arundel; "the lake is deep:" and with the word, he heard the boy plunge into the water, and lost sight of him for a moment. The few garments which they considered necessary, had been tied up in a small bundle and fastened on Arundel's shoulders, so that Pevensey might be totally unencumbered; and now the artist, with the wardrobe on his back, descended the ladder, and as he reached the bottom saw his friend waiting for him, a few yards from the rock. "Away, instantly," said Arundel; "I perceive something like the glimmering of a taper, falling on the waves yonder, from one of the castle windows, and we may be discovered." He now dropped down, in his turn, and rising quickly swam with great velocity towards the shore. There was a sharp, cold wind stirring, and blowing across their course from right to left, raised considerable waves, which dashed over them continually, and at times concealed them from each other. At length Arundel altogether lost sight of his friend, and, fearing lest he might be overcome by fatigue and have lagged behind, turned about, and looked towards the island. To his great astonishment, he saw lights in their apartment, where two or three figures successively appeared at the window, and vanished rapidly. His fears for Pevensey now almost choked him, and having swam about for some time in various directions, to no purpose, he ventured at last, in a suppressed voice, to call out his name. The sound seemed lost in the murmur of the waves, and, after listening for some time, he called again, much louder than before. In an instant, the report of several pistols struck upon his ear, and a slight, but sharp pain, suddenly seized upon his left arm, a little below the shoulder. It was clear that one of the bullets had reached him; and, after anxiously looking about on all sides for his friend, he was about to turn away, and make towards the shore, when he saw a head moving in the water, which he did not doubt, was that of Pevensey. Delight now rendered him imprudent once more, and he called to his friend to make haste, for God's sake. The head answered "Hist!" and rapidly drew nearer and nearer. In another moment, it became evident it was not that of Pevensey; and Arundel shuddered, as he recognized the voice of the Count, in the words, — "Milord, you are once more my prisoner! and saw the ruffian spring towards him, like a tiger. The Count had swam out with a little dagger between his teeth, which he took in his right hand, as he approached Arundel, and

aimed at his wounded arm, while pronouncing the above words. The painter, who, though by no means a large, or powerful man, was active, muscular, and an incomparable swimmer, immediately closed with his antagonist, and after a long and desperate struggle, succeeded in wrenching the dagger from him. "Let me escape," said he; "and I will do you no injury." The Count, whose passions were now enflamed beyond control, made no reply, but again endeavoured to close with him, and grappled at his throat. "Keep off," said Arundel; "I have no wish to have your blood upon my head!" But the other merely muttered a few incoherent oaths, and making a sudden plunge forward, caught him by the right arm, and endeavoured to regain the dagger. The strength of both was now nearly exhausted: and the water got into their mouths as they struggled and struck at each other. At length Arundel, seizing the weapon in his left hand, plunged it into the breast of his enemy; and tearing his arm from his grasp, sprang off by a desperate effort, to escape from his dying energies. In another moment he heard the water bubble and gurgle in his mouth,—and his head disappeared beneath the waves.

This horrible struggle being over, the painter, languid, and nearly worn out, thought he heard at a distance the sound of voices and the dashing of oars upon the water, and conjectured that the boat was drawing near. Whatever might be the consequences, however, he felt that he could only hope to gain the land by managing adroitly the little strength he had left, and therefore proceeded slowly, resting ever and anon upon his oars, as it were, and at last drew near the shore, where he discovered the white figure of Pevensey moving to and fro; and in two or three minutes more the friends were congratulating each other upon their escape, and preparing to strike off into the wood.

In three days they arrived, barefoot, nearly naked, and half starved at Naples, when the insolence and carelessness of the tutor were explained. He had consented, in consideration of becoming master of a very handsome estate in England, to become at the same time liege lord of one of those forlorn damsels, called old maids, who scatter themselves over all Europe, in search of husbands, and was now a rich man. By the advice of several friends, he agreed, after two day's deliberation, to deliver over Pevensey to the care of his friend Arundel; and the moment this affair was settled, and the necessary sum of money drawn from the Neapolitan banker, our modern Py-lades and Orestes hurried off for England. I cannot pause to describe their journey; but it is not difficult to conceive the state of mind in which the artist moved onwards, towards his home, fearing that every stop, let, or hindrance which fate threw in their way, was the very circumstance that cut him off from hope, and was to render him wretched for the remainder of his days. There was also a feeling of horror, which could not exactly be called remorse, accompanying the vivid recollection of the deadly struggle in the lake: and, though it had been life for life, he bitterly regretted that his freedom had been purchased with blood. It was now long, moreover, since he had received tidings of his mother; and he feared that like the disobedient children of Jacob, he might involuntarily bring the gray hairs of his parent with sorrow to the grave. All these causes of dejection, weighing upon his mind at once, and by their union adding poignancy and efficacy to each other, succeeded in plunging his spirit into the deepest gloom. He thought the horses slept as they moved along the road, and in his breathless impatience to be at his journey's end, appeared for the moment to lose all feelings of humanity, hurrying and urging forward the jaded animals which dashed on at full speed before the carriage. The moment they had gained one eminence his eye rested upon the next, and his wishes would have annihilated the intervening space.

The day, in fact, now drew very near, in which Helen Pevensey was to pass from the regions of maidenhood into a state, in which even the imagina-

tion of Arundel could not follow her; and he might possibly arrive just one moment too late. Yet, allowing that he reached London before or on the wedding day, what could he do to retard even for an instant the celebration of that ceremony which was to be the sealing of his fate? What would this proud and wealthy beauty say to the strange passion of a nameless, and houseless, and penniless wretch like himself, coming to claim her hand at the very moment in which it was to be placed, with the consent or by the command of her parents, in that of another, in token of eternal union? Would not the mere mention of his love, conceived in a moment, nourished in secrecy and obscurity, and never made known to its object, be regarded as too absurd even for laughter! He could not answer all these questions which that ancient substitute for the gods, called Prudence, whispered to his mind; but he unrolled his little ragged portrait, which he had carried off with his clothes from the castle, and spread it upon his knees; and the sweet smile it seemed to cast upon him re-assured his soul. Pevensey, likewise, said all he could to keep alive his hopes; and in this way he hurried on, alternately buoyed up and dejected, until he found himself in London, driving with all possible speed up Portland Place, where the town house of the Pevensey family was situated.

The first thing that caught Pevensey's eye was a couple of mutes, standing with the emblems of death in their hands at the door of his father's house; and his heart smote him as the thought darted into his mind that his mother or his sister was gone beyond all reach of the reproaches he had prepared for them both: The idea that it might be any other member of his family never once occurred to him. Springing from the carriage, he rushed into the house, followed by Arundel, and in another moment found himself in the apartment of death, beside his father's coffin. His mother and Helen, in their coal-black robes, had been sitting by the corpse, their eyes red with weeping, and their hearts sick with anguish; but the instant he entered, their arms were about his neck, and their tears flowing more copiously than ever. Arundel, stricken with astonishment, pierced with grief, and altogether uncertain whether to remain or retire, stood motionless at a little distance from the family group, his heart beating, his head dizzy, and his frame trembling with emotion. At length, after the first burst of sorrow was over, Pevensey recollected his friend, and in an instant made him one, as it were, of the family, by exclaiming with earnestness, as he grasped Arundel's hand, and drew him towards the coffin:—"Mother, the friend who has saved my life!" Lady Pevensey and Helen, who now for the first time, observed Arundel's presence, gave him such welcome as circumstances would permit; while Pevensey himself with trembling hand lifted up the covering from the face of his father's corpse, and fell upon it, and kissed it, with a bitterness and an agony which can never be conceived, but by those who have pressed their lips against the marble lips of the dead, and yearned while doing so to become cold also, and be laid with the beloved object in the grave.

Such was the sight that greeted our friends on their arrival, instead of the festivities of a marriage. As his self-possession, and ordinary habit of mind returned, Arundel began unconsciously to compare the mourning beauty before him with the ideal beauty of his imagination, and his memory; and he found that they were different, and yet the same. The creature of the mind had more airiness, simplicity, girlhood, and tenderness; the real woman had more majesty, beauty, and intellectuality; for Helen's mind had grown still more than her body, and lent the latter a glory which no perfection of form can bestow. The fairness of her complexion appeared by contrast with her dark garments almost supernatural; while the beauty and symmetry of her features banished that air of insipidity which extraordinary fairness sometimes induces. She seemed considerably taller than when he first saw her, but the expression of the whole figure, as well as of

the countenance remained the same ; and the longer he looked upon her, the less she appeared to be changed.

The lover her father had provided for her, and would, had he lived, have compelled her to accept, was now in the house, having arrived in town on the very day before the melancholy event ; but Arundel, when he saw him, experienced no access of jealousy. He was a young, and rather handsome gentleman, and as accomplished as the cares of others could render him ; but he had no character of his own, — nothing of that high, imaginative, poetical temper of mind, which acts upon the female heart like a spell, and when seconded by a bold determination is irresistible. Having hitherto relied at least as much upon the number of his acres as upon his personal attractions, he now felt his real insignificance, and began in his heart to believe that Helen was not fated to be his. There was no speaking of such matters, however, in a house of mourning ; and, the man, moreover, though fantastic and silly enough, was not destitute of feeling, and could not but be affected at the grief of Helen and her family. Reading his fate in the air and manner of the girl, no less than in the studied and almost savage coldness of Pevensey, he therefore disappeared at the conclusion of the funeral ceremonies ; and thus the field was left open to Arundel.

On the very day of his arrival in London, Arundel had written to his mother, detailing the particulars of his residence in Italy, which accounted for the long silence he had maintained, and promising to be with her the moment the mortal remains of his friend's father should be committed to the dust. The Pevenseys had at that period a villa in South Wales, not many miles from Llandilo, whither the whole family now determined to remove for a while, as much to escape from the visits of ceremonious friends, as to hush their sorrows in solitude. They therefore proceeded with Arundel towards his home, where the unfortunate young man found his mother, not dead, indeed, but on the threshold of death, her spirit fluttering, as it were, upon her lips, and waiting but for one fond embrace of her beloved and only child, to depart in peace. When the widow had pressed her son for one fond moment to her breast, her looks wandered to the strangers who had entered with him, and as her eye, and that of Lady Pevensey met, both shrieked suddenly ; the words, — "My sister !" — simultaneously escaped from their lips, and the latter rushing to the bed had just time to receive her sister's last breath, and the dying pressure of her hand. Arundel now learned, in the midst of grief and tears, the secret of his mother's history : she had married for love, been cast off by her parents, and losing, shortly after, her fond and beloved husband, had hidden herself in her pride from such of her relations as might have pitied and aided her. This narrative, related in a letter which his mother, seeing her end approach, had written, and directed to her son, was confirmed by the testimony of Lady Pevensey. His friends would now have bestowed a pompous funeral upon the remains of his mother, but Arundel insisted that her death, like her life, should be obscure, and that the tears of affection only should hallow the spot where she reposed, without epitaph or monumental stone.

The real name of Arundel I must conceal as he is still living, and has acquired that fame, as an artist, which his genius deserves. His grief yielded, as all grief does, to the force of time : and love came at length to light up his soul. Notwithstanding the many glorious pictures which his pencil has created, he still regards the portrait of Helen, painted from memory, as the master-piece of his art ; and often, while he himself, or his beautiful wife relates to me, and other friends, some snatches of the above history, the ragged little portrait is taken down from the wall, where, except that it is framed, it still hangs in precisely the same condition in which it was, when brought from the robber's castle in the Apennines.

LADY ANNE'S BRIDAL.

A TALE OF THE TWO CHURCHES.

BY MISS AGNES STRICKLAND.

[From "*The Gem*," for 1835.]

IN one of the western counties of England is situated the sequestered and beautiful valley of Deepdale. It is, in sooth, a spot of peculiar loveliness, yet so lonely withal, that when the curious traveller beholds, in the depths of its almost untrodden solitudes, two noble Gothic churches, rising, in rival grandeur, upon his view, he is, at first, tempted to believe that objects are multiplied to him by some deception of vision. Having satisfied himself of the reality of what he sees, he, in the next place, infers the poverty of the inhabitants, by observing that there are no altar or coffin-shaped tombs, or raised slabs, and very few graves that can even boast of the humble distinguishment of upright head and foot-stones; and calculates the scantiness of the population, from the small number of briar-bound turf mounds, which denote the last abode of the lowly peasant in the burying-ground of either church, and muses why, and by what means, two such edifices can have been erected, in a place which could scarcely have required a church of half the dimensions of either of these solemn temples, both of which are so rich in the elaborate ornaments of the florid Gothic architecture, that they must have cost, in workman's wages alone, a sum sufficient to startle the wealthiest and most liberal-minded select vestry in London. The marvel however, is lessened by the explanation afforded by the personage who performs the important offices of parish-clerk and sexton, in one or other of these twin churches, who, haply observing a stranger employed in exploring the localities of the spot, issues from his domicile with a ponderous key in his hand, and, inspired with silver hopes, volunteers to admit "his honour" into that church of which he considers himself the peculiar guardian.

His services accepted, he points to a low ivy-grown wall which separates the two burying-grounds, and informs the visitor that it is the line of demarcation between two parishes which meet on that spot, neither of which could boast of a church till the days of the third Edward, in whose time, with that venerable gossip Tradition, two wealthy co-heiresses, of one parish, unluckily placed their affections on the lord of the manor of the next, who, being of a remarkably grateful temper, regretted that he could not marry them both; but, as the claims of both to his regard were so equal that he found some difficulty in deciding upon which of the fair spinsters to fix his choice, he left them to settle that point between themselves. Now, as that was a matter on which it was utterly impossible that they should ever agree, they had recourse to the expedient of casting lots for the object of their equal affection, when the youngest sister, throwing the highest number, became his wife, and the elder, renouncing the world, buried her disappointed hopes in a convent, and devoted her wealth to the erection of the first-built church, which she dedicated to her patroness St. Agnes. The married sister, however, became a widow shortly after her marriage, which she attributed to the wrath of Heaven at the crime she had committed, in obtaining the advantage over her sister through the use of false dice: and she confessed the fraud to her spiritual director, who enjoined her to atone

for it by imitating the example of her pious sister, and building a church also. The penitent widow complied; and the second church was erected, and dedicated to St. Mary.

After this legendary preface, Master Ralph Digwell, or Peter Pitchpipe, whichever it chances to be, introduces the visitor into the holy pile, which he emphatically styles *his church*, and points out the tomb of the foundress, with her *effigies* and Latin epitaph, repeating, at the same time, in solemn recitative, four quaint rhymes, not more ancient than the days of James the First, which he avers to be the very lines the lady ordered to be engraved on her tomb, though nothing can differ more from the half-obliterated monastic sentences thereon inscribed. Then he proceeds to do the honours of the monuments of the ancestors of the noble family, whose pew with its crimson curtains and cushions, takes up a good sixth of the church, and is exalted two feet higher than any other.

Pass into the other church, and you will find every thing ditto to this—by which you gather, that a nobleman's family is resident in each parish; and that there exists no slight rivalry between them, you learn from the zeal with which the clerk of either parish extols and magnifies the superiority of his lord and his lord's ancestors, over the patron peer of the other church and his progenitors.

One amen-crier has certainly the advantage over his antagonist, in this—that he can boast of the greater number of monuments belonging to his lord's ancestors, neither can their superior grandeur be disputed; but then, his opponent stoutly avers, that the coffins in his patron's vault infinitely surpass in magnificence any which the other is able to display, and boldly challenges him to the proof, "that the gentleman may judge for himself." But from this test Master Ralph Digwell always shrinks, well knowing that the coffins of the noble Fitz-Aymers would make a very sorry appearance, bereft of the rich velvet, gold lace, silver-gilt nails, and all the rest of their pompous funeral decorations, which he has since converted to his own use. Nay, there is a plumber in a market-town, a few miles distant, who must suppose that Ralph Digwell is the proprietor of a lead-mine, from the vast quantity of that metal which he has sold to him, during the time he has held the office of sexton and parish clerk in the church of St. Mary, Deepdale. From this hint you may infer, gentle reader, that it is well for Ralph Digwell that the present Earl Fitz-Aymer entertains such a horror of every thing that can remind him of death, as to preclude all chance of his ever entering the family vault, till he is himself confined, and carried thither, to take up his final residence among his ancestors; when he will be, most probably, as insensible of the depredations that have been committed upon their funeral finery, as to those that will, undoubtedly, be perpetrated upon his own, provided the same sly knave keeps the key of his *domus ultima*.

It happened one evening that the rival sextons met at a little wicket-gate which affords a means of communication between their respective churchyards, and mutually drew up for a gossip; for, though they never talked without quarrelling, yet they always made a point of conversing whenever they did meet. "Out of the fulness of the heart the mouth speaketh," saith the proverb, and Master Digwell accosted Peter Pitchpipe as follows:

"I reckon our church will boast a grander bridal to-morrow than poor St. Agnes ever witnessed, since the disappointed old maid, who built it, laid the foundation-stone. Somebody, who shall be nameless, would like to pocket my fee on the occasion."

"Neighbour Digwell," returned Pitchpipe, "I don't teach the young ones their catechism every Sunday, without hearing in mind the tenth commandment; and, to tell you a bit of my mind, I would not give thee half-a-crown for thy fees to-morrow."

"Not half-a-crown for my fees, at the wedding of my Lord's daughter, Lady Anne, with a grand Marquis! That is nothing but your spite, you

envious old screech-owl ! because the young Viscount don't get my Lady Anne."

"Why, so he would, you barbarous flint-heart ! if the young lady, poor dear ! might be free to choose."

"Pity she should, Master Pitchpipe, pity she should, if so be she were imprudent enough to wish to marry such a wild-fire spark as he ; and his father and my lord born foes too, as a man may say, when their grandfathers kilt each other in a duel under the fairies' oak, on the heath yonder."

"All I can say to that Master Digwell, is, that the young people have been better Christians than the old ones ; ay, and read their Bibles to better purpose : for there we are commanded to love, and not to hate, our enemies. Not but what my Lord Deepdale would have given them his blessing, if Lord Fitz-Aymer had not been such a hard-hearted man, that he preferred his own revenge to the happiness of his only child, and so forbade her to think of Lord Beauchamp."

"And in the right of it, too, when he can marry her to a Marquis, which it seems, is a grander thing than an Earl, and next to a Duke."

"Well, for my part," said Peter Pitchpipe, "I should be ashamed to have any hand in marrying such an unsuitable couple as the old withered Marquis and lovely Lady Anne."

"So as the Marquis's money chinks well in my bag, I shall think him handsome enough for any lady, let her be who she may," returned Digwell, with a sardonic grin.

"Fie upon you, you greedy old churl ! you know very well that Lady Anne hates him worse than death."

"That may be his concern, but it is none of mine ; for, look ye, I never got a fee from a bride in my life, if she were ever such a happy one : so I always keeps my eye upon the bridegroom."

At Fitz-Aymer Castle, the subject of my Lady Anne's bridal formed matter of still more angry discussion than it had done between the rival sextons ; and report said, that the young lady had wept, entreated, and finally knelt at the feet of the obdurate Earl, her father, in a vain attempt to prevail upon him to excuse her from these abhorrent nuptials. Much more was said upon the occasion than was true ; for never was a young lady less lachrymose than Lady Anne. She was, in sooth, a lass of spirit, and had never fainted, nor been afflicted with a single hysteric fit, in all her life : yet awful were the swoonings and hysterics that were reported of her ; not to speak of wringing of hands and rending of hair, besides tears too manifold to record. But these were things of course, and the natural consequences of her dislike to the mature spouse her careful papa had provided for her. All sorts and conditions of people, in the two parishes, were clamorous and passionate, in their sympathy for her, and indignation against her father and the bridegroom elect. The village mind was in a state of the highest excitation, respecting the nuptials of the much-pitied Lady Anne, when the day that was appointed for their solemnization arrived ; and, as the morning was uncommonly fine, the church-yard of St. Mary, Deepdale, was thronged with all the indignant and sight-loving inhabitants of the two parishes. The women forsook the houses, the men the fields : the hay was left to turn itself, by the one, and the pots to boil, or cool, at their own discretion, by the other. No one could attend to his own concerns for thinking of those of my Lady Anne, and every one was in the very height of discussing them, when the bridal procession drove up ; and they half forgot their commiseration for her in the extravagant delight and wonder with which they surveyed the long train of showy equipages, with so many grandly dressed folks within, and still finer dressed servants without, with white favours in their gold and silver-laced hats. There were abundance of "lauk-a-daisies, look there !" from the women, and "stars o' mine," from the men, and "my eyes !" from the boys and girls, as each carriage

set down its noble freight, and drove off to make way for another, and another, and another after that, till the good people firmly believed that all the lords and ladies in England, save and except old my Lord Deepdale, and young my Lord Beauchamp, his son, were come to my Lady Anne's wedding. Never had been seen in that church-yard such a waving of ostrich and marabout plumage, and fluttering of white lace veils, as was exhibited that morning by the six young and noble bridesmaids. As for the bride herself, she was dressed much like other brides of her rank and expectations, in an orthodox quantity of white satin and Brussels lace. She wore no bonnet; and her rich profusion of sunny tresses were wreathed with orange blossoms, and partially shaded with a long veil, of the most superb lace. She was in form petite, but perfectly sylph-like, and sweetly pretty. She looked a little pale or so, but, to the surprise of every one, shed no tears. In fact, she appeared to have made up her mind to go through the business with firmness, in compliance with the exordiums of her lady mother, who, before she left the carriage, had pathetically entreated her "not to expose herself, by any public manifestation of her sentiments towards her future husband."

Lady Anne was an only child, and, of course, a spoiled child: she had early known and felt her own importance, and had been accustomed from her very cradle, to have her own way in every thing. It was only in this most important action of her life that she had received a serious contradiction. But in this, the Earl, her father, resolutely, and somewhat harshly, enforced his paternal authority; and, in contests of this kind, the weaker party is generally obliged to yield to the will of the stronger. It was, however, plain to all, that it was no meek, lamb-like sacrifice that they were leading so gaily decked out to the altar: there was a self-willed petulance in her air, and a scornful spirit in her eye, that made the Marquis shrink, and look like the fool he was, whenever he encountered its disdainful glance; and there was even eloquence in the manner in which she trampled the beautiful flowers that were strewn before her. It was one of the ways in which the little vixen vented her angry displeasure at the pomps and vanities prepared in honour of the scene in which she was to be the reluctant *prima donna*. The Earl, her father, was evidently mortified and exasperated with her; and there was something approaching to brutality in the rough manner in which he seized her tiny white-gloved hand, and drew it through his arm, to lead her into the church. There was answering disdain in the indignant flash of her bright blue eye, and the sudden suffusion of the pale cheek with glowing crimson; also, there was a certain slight, but decidedly rebellious, motion of the shoulders, and a retrograde step, with the pretty little foot of the bride, as though she would have resisted crossing the threshold of the church. But the resolute Earl drew her forcibly forward — I am persuaded that it would have given him positive pleasure to beat the provoking young slut; but there is no managing family matters in public, and she permitted him to lead her up to the altar without any further show of resistance. The Marquis took his proper place by her side, — the minister opened his book. The bridesmaids looked as interesting as they could, and put all the blushes they could command upon immediate service. The bridesmen looked quizzical, the Earl authoritative, the Countess apprehensive, the bridegroom foolish, and the bride sullen. No one appeared perfectly at ease but Ralph Digwell, the parish clerk, whose horn was mightily exalted upon the occasion; and he was (in his own opinion, at least) the most important person present, and certainly the most to be envied, as he stood in all the glories of a bran-new black coat, purchased upon the speculation of the noble bridegroom's anticipated donation, holding a huge open prayer-book, and literally panting to pronounce the final amen, which he always considered the most consequential word in the service of matrimony. There was a dead hush in the church; for the bridegroom had already signified his assent, in answer to that important ques-

tion, "Wilt thou have this woman for thy wedded wife?" and the minister, turning to the bride, said, though rather in a faltering tone (for he was well aware of the nature of her sentiments towards the bridegroom,) "Wilt thou have this man for thy wedded husband?" expecting hesitation, or a flood of tears, in reply, if not an obstinate silence. Lady Anne, however, was not of the crying sort: she seldom hesitated upon any point, and she always spoke her mind; so she boldly and decidedly answered, "I will not," in so loud a tone that the resolute negative resounded through the church; then, turning quickly to the crest-fallen bridegroom, she said, "I told you so before, my lord; and now I hope you will believe that I am in earnest."

"Lady Anne, I blush for the impropriety of your conduct!" said the Countess; "and I wonder you are not ashamed of the manner in which you have exposed yourself, by putting this public insult upon the Marquis of Greystock."

"Had the Marquis of Greystock possessed the common feelings, or the honourable delicacy, of a gentleman, mamma, he would have spared me the trouble of coming hither, and himself the mortification of a public refusal," returned Lady Anne.

"Come, come, madam! I am not to be thus trifled with," said the Earl, sternly; "and I insist upon your fulfilling your engagement with the Marquis."

"I never entered into an engagement with him," said Lady Anne pouting.

"But I have for you, Lady Anne."

"Oh! true, papa; but that is quite another thing."

"And I tell you, madam, that you shall marry the Marquis," said the Earl, bending his brows most awfully upon the fair rebel.

"Impossible, papa; for you see the church very properly considers the lady's consent an indispensable part of the marriage ceremony; and, as I am a woman of conscience, I find it impossible to answer in the affirmative, when I am asked by the minister if I will have a man I hate for my wedded husband."

"Confound your conscience!" retorted the earl furiously.

Here, the mortified Marquis drew the Earl aside, to propose some plan for his private consideration; the Countess joined herself to the council. Every one in the church had been thrown into utter consternation, by the unexpected freak of my Lady Anne. The parson looked down upon his book in dismay; Ralph Digwell groaned in spirit at the perversity of the bride, and, like squire Richard, in Vanbrugh's comedy, "thought she was not too big to be whipped." The bridemaids tittered: the bridegroom elevated their eye-brows, and stared. The elders of the bride's family were ashamed to look the bridegroom's friends in the face, after the insult they had received in the person of the Marquis, from their wayward young relation, for which they began to offer apologies in the most doleful tone imaginable.

But what did the bride meantime? Truly, the bride did the wisest thing that she could do, under such circumstances; for she fairly walked out of the church, through the door opposite to that by which she entered it; and, exerting all the speed with which youth and love could inspire her, she hurried through the church-yard, and passing through the wicket-gate of communication, entered that adjoining, where she was met, and rapturously greeted, by an elegant young man, who, it is scarcely necessary to explain, was no other than her favoured lover, the Viscount Beauchamp. By him she was immediately conducted into the church of St. Agnes, where also a white-robed priest stood in readiness at the altar, book in hand, seconded by Ralph Digwell's rival, Peter Pitchpipe. There, too, were assembled the fair sisters of the Viscount, prepared to officiate as bridemaids, and his

younger brother, who obligingly undertook to give away the bride. No explanation was necessary; for it was all a preconcerted plan, arranged through the agency of Lucy Pitchpipe, the parish clerk's daughter, who filled the post of waiting-maid to Lady Anne.

No time was consumed in idle compliments; and, without so much as pausing for the bride to recover her breath, the minister commenced the marriage-service, in which he used such laudable despatch, that the enraged father and rejected bridegroom only entered the church in time to hear Lady Anne pronounce as decided an "*I will*," as she had before an "*I will not*."

"I forbid the marriage! Proceed at your peril," vociferated the Earl, in a voice of thunder.

"I was of age yesterday," said the half-wedded bride, by way of parenthesis to the solemn vow of obedience which, in defiance of the paternal interdict, she persisted in making.

"I will disinheret you," exclaimed the angry Earl.

"With all my wordly goods I thee endow," pursued the lover bridegroom, with a look of unutterable tenderness: and the Earl had the mortification of witnessing the conclusion of the spousal rites. The Marquis, seeing no reason for his doing the same, flung himself into the elegant travelling-carriage which he had provided for a very different occasion, and shouted to the post-lads to take the white and silver cockades out of their hats, and drive off. Ralph Digwell stood looking after him, with a rueful countenance; while the melancholy conviction, "no hopes of golden fees to-day," smote upon his heart, and he began to cast about in his mind how his new black coat was to be paid for, there being no present prospect of a death in his patron's family; and he reflected, with a bitter pang of envy, upon the superior good fortune of his rival, Peter Pitchpipe.

With respect to the proceedings of the higher powers on this extraordinary business, be it known, that the Earl Fitz-Aymer talked loudly and angrily; and the bride, who knew her cue, listened patiently till all his sayings were exhausted. She was then all duty and submission. The bridegroom was as conciliatory as the husband of an heiress ought to be. The lady mother temporised, as lady mothers generally do on such occasions, and at length mollified the wrath of her offended lord, by reminding him of the admirable geographical situation of the estates of Lord Deepdale and himself, for a marriage between their heirs. He acknowledged the propriety of the remark; and the thought struck him, at the same moment, that, considering the resolute temper of Lady Anne, it was very well that she had not contracted an alliance which offered no such local advantages; and, as the Earl of Deepdale, who was in every respect his equal, offered to make all proper settlements upon her, he at length determined to shake hands with his noble neighbour, and bestowed a sort of sulky benediction on the newly-wedded pair, which he qualified with an intimation that he should expect them to proceed to the continent, and reside there for a twelvemonth at least, as his friend the Marquis of Greystock would consider himself very dishonourably treated if he were to be publicly reconciled to them before that period. The happy pair readily agreed to this arrangement; but the term of their banishment was very considerably shortened by the marriage of the Marquis of Greystock, who, in a fit of bachelor desperation, took to wife his chaplain's pretty sister, who made him one of the happiest elderly gentlemen in the peerage, and perfectly consoled him for the affront he had received from Lady Anne Fitz-Aymer.

THE STORY OF FIESCO.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "MAY YOU LIKE IT."

[From "*The Gem*," for 1885.]

"How justly am I punished for being such a proud, such a happy bride!" said the gentle Countess of Lavagna to herself. "How deeply did I feel the triumph, which I did not show, when Fiesco was mine—when the dream was realised, the sweet and dazzling dream, that Fiesco loved me! Alas! I have loved him too well! I have only felt my existence in his presence! and now I had but just begun to lose the awe which mingled with my love for him—to lose the timid, trembling awe of a girl's love, in all a wife's fond, free affection. Yet all my happiness seems breaking up! Fiesco is changed—wherefore, I know not; how, I can scarcely tell; only this poor heart feels the change. Only feels it, did I say? Do I not know it! for he is not here.—Where is your master?" said the young Countess, turning suddenly to her nurse, who at that instant entered the room: "has not my Lord returned?"

"Ah no, my sweet one!" replied the old and loving nurse: "that is, he is not now at home. He came in soon after yourself, but only to change his dress for gay and masquerading garments, and went out, unattended, even by a single lacquey."

"And left he no message for me? How could you see him depart, without using the privilege which my love has given you? Dear nurse! had not your woman's wit a word to keep him?"

"I made bold to speak to him," she answered; "to ask when he would return—what message he would leave with me. He stared at me, as if his thoughts were wandering, at first; but at the repeated mention of your name, a soft and gracious smile came like light over his countenance, and he bade me bear a thousand loves to my dear mistress."

"But his return!—spake he not of his return, nurse?"

"No, sweet one! not a word did he say. I would have asked again, but he was gone while the words were on my lips."

"Well, nurse! good night!"

"Good night! Why, my own child! you are not undressed yet! Shall I send your maidens to you?—or, let me stay to-night; for you seem sad and thoughtful, and might not please to bear the gaze of young and careless eyes."

"Dear nurse! good night! I need no help at present, I shall not go to rest just yet; indeed, I could not rest. Yet stay awhile. Take hence these glittering baubles—on this aching bosom they hang too heavily. Untwist these jewels from my hair. Why am I thus bedizened, unless in mockery of an aching heart? Nurse, dear nurse, how kind you are! 'Tis sweet to rest my head upon your bosom—it has been often laid there."

"What is the matter, darling?" said the nurse, looking down fondly on the soft downcast eyes of her beloved lady, and smoothing the beautiful hair on her brow with her wrinkled hand. Leonora did not answer just at first; but when she did reply, she gently raised her head, and said, almost playfully,

"Perhaps, dear nurse! I can scarcely tell, myself, what I have to com-

plain of; and, if so, I am sure I ought not to trouble others with my fancies." The old nurse was discreet enough to see that her mistress did not wish to be questioned.

* * * * *

Long before the hour of matins the Countess of Lavagna entered the ancient church where she was accustomed to perform her devotions. An attendant followed her, bearing a basket of orange blossoms and white roses. They passed onward through the long and dusky aisles to a little vaulted chapel. The gentle lady knelt for a few minutes before the altar, and then filled the silver vases there with her fresh and snowy flowers. As her attendant quitted the chapel, she turned to an old monument that stood at the farthest end. It was the monument of a former Count of Lavagna a brave and gentle warrior, who had been killed in battle a short time after his marriage. The figure of the young nobleman, carved in white marble, lay upon the tomb. His young widow had erected the monument not long before her death, for she had died within the year of her widowhood; and her own tomb had been erected at the foot of her husband's.

"I was wont to pity thee," said Leonora. "I was wont to come hither and feel that I could have mourned with thee, young and melancholy lady, deprived so soon of thy dearest earthly treasure! but now I almost envy such a lot. 'Tis better to mourn the high-minded, honourable, dead, than to bewail, as I do now, the lost glory of the living. I almost wish this aching heart of mine was freed from the wretched vanities of the unsatisfying world."

For a little while the gentle lady stood in deep thought, leaning upon the marble monument of the young and widowed Countess of Lavagna: then she remembered, that it was not merely to bewail her own troubles, that she had entered the sacred edifice; but to confess that she herself was weak and sinful, and to pray for patience to bear the trials of her lot, and faith to walk meekly and resignedly with her God. She rose up from her quiet prayers refreshed and comforted in spirit. Nay, she left the church deeply impressed with the sinfulness of murmuring at any trial she might be called upon to endure; for her eye fell upon an old painting of the Man of Sorrows, standing in the midst of cruel mockers in the purple robe, with the crown of thorns on his head, and the reed in his hand. Underneath the picture was written, "He pleased not Himself." Those words conveyed to the heart of Leonora the lesson she felt it necessary to learn, and to learn at once.

The door of Fiesco's *own apartment* was partly open. Leonora, as she passed by, pushed it a little farther open, and said, playfully and gently, "May I come in?" No answer was returned; and, peeping into the apartment, she repeated her question. Fiesco had thrown himself back on the couch where he had been sitting, and was fast asleep. Lightly and cautiously she stole across the room and, bending down over him, she kissed his forehead. Still Fiesco did not wake: he was too wearied to feel so slight a disturbance, as the gentle voice, and the light footfall, and the soft lips, of Leonora. She sat down opposite her husband, to wait quietly his awaking; and, as her full gaze rested on his countenance, she thought within herself, "Can this be the most thoughtless witing in Genoa? Can that broad, thoughtful brow, those deep-set eyes, those lips so closely shut, and so expressive of decision and firmness, can they be the expressive features of Fiesco's real character? Is it possible that such a man should be utterly given up to frivolous and wanton pleasures?" Just then, a frown knit the brow of the sleeper, and his lip and nostril were slightly curled with an indignant and haughty scorn. He struck his firmly closed hand upon the open pages of a book that lay upon the couch beside him, and a few muttered words escaped from his lips. The book fell, and, as Leonora took it up, the title met her eye. "You have been read-

ing the *Orations of Cicero*," she said, as Fiesco awoke, offering him the volume as she spoke.

"Have I?" he said, carelessly taking the book, but appearing a little confused. "You mean, my Leonora, that I have not been able to keep awake over this same dull volume."

Leonora Cibo had become the wife of Giovanni Ludovico Fiesco, Count of Lavagna, soon after he came into possession of his paternal inheritance. His family was one of the oldest and most noble among the nobles of Genoa *La Superba*, as that city of beautiful palaces has long been named. Not long after his marriage, to the astonishment of all, Fiesco became an altered being. The quiet manliness, the deep reserved thoughtfulness of his character, left him suddenly. He became, to all appearance, madly devoted to the pleasures and follies of the most profligate society in Genoa. Some thought he was an infatuated gambler: others looked upon him as the dupe of some shameless woman; and his name was coupled with the names of many ladies high in rank but light and wanton in their demeanour. Some few, and those utter strangers to the gentle, lovely Leonora, expressed their fears that he was disappointed and wretched in his marriage, and that the wife of his choice made his home unhappy. Leonora herself said nothing, made no complaint, bore every indignity with an undisturbed sweetness; but she became meekly and quietly sad, though she smiled and spoke as usual.

"Will you not stay beside me a little while, my Fiesco?" said Leonora as, leaning on his arm, they ascended the marble staircase of the Doria Palace, "'Tis to please you that I come, and yet we are as strangers to one another, whenever we appear together. Do I tease you, my beloved husband?" she continued, observing that Fiesco's head was turned away, "Do I tease you? Forgive me, if I do; and I will be silent."

Fiesco had not heard her first question; but he recovered, with a smile, from his deep abstraction. "Tease me! (he repeated her words) you charm, you delight me, at all times."

As he spoke, the doors of the splendid saloon were thrown open by the servants who attended them; and, in a minute, Fiesco was at the side of a vain and beautiful woman, and one distinguished for her boldness and levity, though exquisitely beautiful and of high rank.

Leonora herself was soon annoyed by the familiar and offensive attentions of Giannettino Doria, the nephew of the venerable Andrea Doria, then the first man in Genoa. Giannettino was an ill-educated, vulgar-minded fellow, long the sworn enemy of the Count Fiesco; but now, to the astonishment of every one, his friend and intimate associate. This Giannettino did not attempt to conceal his admiration of the lovely Countess of Lavagna. Deeply pained and disgusted with his insolent familiarities, the chaste and modest Leonora could not help turning her eyes once or twice, almost unconsciously, towards her husband. She saw the gaze of his dark proud eye, fixed for a moment, full and sternly, on Giannettino, but only for a moment: the most calm and careless smiles succeeded.

"Dear husband," she said to Fiesco, when she was alone with him afterwards, "how could you leave me so the whole long evening? I cannot expose myself again, indeed I cannot, to such attentions from Giannettino Doria. Are you not indignant at his insolence?"

"Am I not rather charmed at his exquisite taste," replied Fiesco, smiling.

"At any rate, my Fiesco," said Leonora, "I shall take care not to put myself in the way of such insulting familiarities again."

"Really," cried Fiesco, "you judge poor Giannettino a little hardly. I find little to complain of about him."

"Is that your true opinion, my Fiesco?"

He stared at her a moment : then drawing her gently towards him, he playfully twined a long ringlet of her luxuriant hair around his fingers, and kissed the downcast lids of her modest eyes, now swelled with tears.

"Yes, yes!" he answered, "it is my true opinion, sweetest wife; but why do you weep?" for now her tears fell fast.

"For the simplest reason, my Fiesco," she replied, fixing her tearful eyes, with an appealing look, upon his countenance; "I weep because I am unhappy. My heart is full of grief whenever I behold my husband, the first, the noblest mind in Genoa, as I have this night beheld him. I must speak, if only to remind you of talents, of no common order, that you seem to have forgotten, of your station in this our beloved Genoa. Does not the state demand your services? Do you not live as if you had forgotten all this, my husband?"

"My fair and eloquent monitor," replied Fiesco, archly coaxingly, "are these the subjects fit for ladies' lips?"

"No, not for ladies' lips, but for your lips, your mind, your heart, Fiesco."

"It must be very late; 'tis long past midnight," remarked Fiesco, his countenance and manner expressing only careless unconcern. "We must to rest, my Leonora. I will send your women to you, as I go to my dressing-room. You are pale with much fatigue."

"Not with fatigue, Fiesco," she said, sighing deeply, as she spoke; but he was gone, and her words, if not unheard, were quite unheeded.

* * * * *

"I scarcely thought to see you here," said Paolo Pansa; he was sitting in the library of the Lavagna Palace; "but I am glad to see you, Count Fiesco. I have been wishing to tell you that your levity has not made me your dupe. Those very smiles upon that face of yours, are as out of place as the gaudy weeds in which your limbs are fancifully clad. Do I not know that, even from a youth, your countenance has ever worn a grave, deep thoughtfulness. Young as you are, the lines of thought are deeply graven there. You never studied aught in attire but a manly simplicity. Why is the eagle in the peacock's plumage?"

"Perhaps," said Fiesco, carelessly, "I am as others have often been before me; as many a dull and mopish boy has become when he has escaped from his tutor, and left off poring over books. Perhaps I am tired, heartily tired, of your lessons, with all due deference to yourself, my dear and honoured tutor. Forgive my yawning, but the sight of you brings to my remembrance the old worn-out story of freedom, and the public voice, and the rights of free-born men. Pshaw! it makes me sick! I was once like you, most honoured sir! — a lover of the fabled follies of old Rome. I have done dreaming and doating about heroes; Leonidas, the Spartan; Themistocles, of Athens; and Tully, your favourite, the sweet and forceful orator of Rome; or the stern Cato, which is worshipped now. What are you reading? Ha! the Life of Socrates; 'tis rather fine."

Pansa closed the book, and, looking Fiesco in the face, not sternly, but very calmly and searchingly, he said: "I remember, among the fables of old Rome, Fiesco, the story of a deep and crafty fellow, who played the fool till he persuaded all men he was witless, and then burst forth among them like a fire-brand. His name was? What! you have forgotten, or care not to remember. Am I to interpret that upraised eyebrow, and that smile of unconcern, into such language? Well, well, 'tis an old story that you have studied to some purpose, Count of Lavagna: names, we know, are nothing; but the plot of Brutus has not been forgotten with his name. Nay, nay, do not look offended. If you wish your secret to be safe, tell me to be silent; but do not think to dupe me. Do not mistake your friend; I ask no confidence. I wish to know nothing that you would not freely tell me, quite unasked; but, my friend, (my child, I had almost said,) can you

seriously imagine that I am to be deceived like the crowd? — I who have known and studied you so long? — I who have watched over you since your early childhood? There is a secret, is there not?"

"There may, and there may not be," replied Fiesco, rather haughtily.

"That is," said Pansa, "you own the fact, but do not choose to take me into your counsels."

"I did not say so," replied Fiesco; "but ——" and he hesitated.

"Nay, my friend," exclaimed Pansa, "you need not hesitate as if you thought it right to weigh well the advantages of making me a confidant or not. I tell you plainly, that I should decidedly refuse that confidence, were it tendered. I wish for an answer to one question, and I have done. I expect your fiery spirit will take it as an insult; but for that I care not. Are you seeking any selfish end? Answer me this question."

"I had struck down almost any man, at such a question," said the Count of Lavagna; "but to you I answer at once. I have no selfish end in view, but one as grand and glorious as an ancient Roman's."

"I will not doubt your word, my son; but beware, lest in this secret plot of your's, in which you evidently make so many dupes — beware, lest you are making yourself the greatest. You know I always had a rough, blunt way of speaking; and, therefore, you may bear with me while I tell you I like not your affected friendship with Giannettino Doria, a man you hate. I saw you arm in arm with him a few days since. I saw you coming with him from the Doria Palace this very morning. I saw you take his children, his motherless children, in your arms, as if you loved them. There may be policy in this, and many other ways of your's that I have lately noted; but there is a lack of honesty that I cannot tolerate."

"Stop, stop, I entreat you," exclaimed Fiesco, in a voice scarcely louder than a whisper, his cheek becoming of ashy paleness, and his eyes glaring in their deep sockets. "'Tis well that I respect those snow-white hairs. I shall go mad, if you continue speaking such stabbing words."

"There's no occasion for all this violence, boy: no, no, not boy," said Pansa, checking himself, and looking with affection on his pupil. "I meant not to insult or hurt you. Not boy, except in one sense, except when I address you as my son; for as my son I ever must regard you."

A servant entered here, announcing to his master that the signors Verrina and Calogno, were waiting below.

"I will see them presently," said Fiesco.

"And as I," said Pansa, "wish to see neither one nor the other (for, to tell the truth, I have no opinion of them,) I shall take my leave. This door will lead me, will it not, Fiesco? to the apartments of your wife, the loveliest and the sweetest gentlewoman that I have ever known."

"Leonora always sees you with delight," said Fiesco, throwing open the door for Pansa; "and you will find her in her favourite room, or on the terrace, looking towards the sea."

"Those children!" said Fiesco to himself, when left alone; "he touched me there. I felt a villain when I kissed those children! A woman passed and said, 'That man's a father;' and Giannettino, whom I hate, smiled with such fond, paternal love, that all my hatred turned, for a moment, back upon myself. I felt myself no father, but a low, treacherous villain. If ever the great enemy of man entered my heart, it was when I kissed those children."

For many minutes, he walked up and down the library, deep in thought; and he managed in those minutes, to find arguments and excuses enough to satisfy himself. "I am justified," he said, "thoroughly, certainly justified in using any means for such an end! — Calogno, Verrina, my good friends, you are most welcome!"

* * * * *

"Your fête will be magnificent to-night, Lady," said Paolo Pansa, as, many days afterwards, he entered the apartment where the Countess Lavagna was sitting.

"My fête!" replied the lady, looking up with a stare of astonishment: "I never had less idea of a fête, or felt less inclined for one, than on this evening. I have been reading in this my favourite saloon, with no sound but the light splashing of that little fountain, in my ears. Open the lattices, Bianca: since the sun has left us, the light breeze may enter at its own sweet will. Shall we remain here, by the margin of the fountain, or shall we go into this open corridor, and sit down among the jasmines and orange trees? My fête will be magnificent indeed!" she said, and smiled. "See how the large and full-orbed moon is rising! Out of the very waves, she seems to come like a rich golden urn of light; and now she pours her lustre back into the sea, and leaves a quivering and lengthening line of light, as she glides upwards, brightening as she rises. Thousands of stars are sparkling overhead, and the deep azure dome, that rising moon, the glittering stars—these are the splendours of my fête."

"I did not like to interrupt you, sweet lady, in your description of such splendours as I would have you love, for they are splendours fresh from the hands of our high and great Creator; but tell me, did you not expect me?"

"I always welcome you with much delight," replied the lady.

"Still you did not expect me?"

"I am the more pleased to see you."

"But you knew not of my coming?"

"Well then, I did not," said Leonora, "if you will have me answer bluntly."

"I have a billet, Lady, from the Count, your husband, inviting me to meet his gentle wife and himself; and I was about to blame you for bidding me to such a crowded entertainment, when I find you almost as unconcious as myself of the preparations going on below."

* * * * *

"Have my orders been obeyed?—are none permitted to go forth?—have any offered to do so?—are the guests many?" These questions were asked, in a hurried voice, by one who stood at the entrance-gate of the Lavagna Palace, muffled up in a large dark mantle. The porter knew his master's voice, and answered with low and rapid words; but the Count Fiesco stopped not to hear them: he had hastened onward into the Palace with a band of armed men, that passed through the gates just as he stood speaking to the porter.

In less than half an hour he was again before the Palace gates. "How many have entered now?" exclaimed Fiesco. "It is well!" he replied, as the number was told him; and, springing forward, he flung to, with his own hands, the massy gates, and drew the bolts, and summoned, at the moment, a close guard of soldiers. "Let no one pass," he cried, "Keep fast the gates: they open not but at my order."

"And now, my guests!—my friends!—my noble gentleman!" said the Count Fiesco—he had entered the great banquetting hall, by a small door at the upper end:—there is scarce time for particular salutations; but I must address you all as a most courteous host. You stare about you with astonishment, finding no banquet spread, but on all sides armed men. Still, the welcome that I give you, is a more honest hearty welcome, than ever silken lordling gave at his most gorgeous feast. You have known me, latterly, as a fool, a profligate, a most contemptible and senseless fellow! The time is come when I must throw off the mean disguise. I do so as entirely as I fling off this clogging mantle." He threw off the mantle as he spoke, and stood before them, clad from head to foot in close and glittering

armour, every limb and his whole body covered, all but his graceful throat and head, and they were bare. "The time is come," he exclaimed, "and Genoa must be freed from the tyranny of certain of her nobles. An hour hence, and Genoa will be free. Behold the fête to which I have invited you! That dolt, Giannettino Doria, would fain be master of this Genoa—of our free and beautiful Genoa. I have written proofs of his intrigues and treacheries; and at the proper season you shall see them. He feels, and he has cause to do so, that I will never submit to his insolent ambition. He would willingly get me out of his way; and he has sought to do so. He has tried poison, and the assassin's dagger, but in vain; for I am here to lead you to the downfall of his whole faction, and himself among them. Be free, and follow me. I go to raise our lost Republic from its ashes, to build up again the noble edifice in strength and glory; the blood of Doria will cement it well. My plans are well and deeply laid; and, believe me, I know not what it is to fear on this occasion. My friends, I love and honour you. I would make you my comrades in this grand design. I have three hundred armed soldiers within these very walls. My well-manned fleet is floating in the harbour. The guards, both at the Palace and in the Port, are in my interest. Fifteen hundred of our poor mechanics watch for my signals to fly to arms. Two thousand of my vassals, and two thousand soldiers, furnished by the Duke of Placentia, are at this moment entering the city; and all this has been done with the most perfect secrecy. Not the slightest suspicion of my proceedings has got wind as yet; I have foreseen and obviated every risk, though many a perilous risk have I encountered. But the glory, my brethren, the glory that will this day be mine, it must be shared by you."

* * * * *

Fiesco hastened to the apartments of his wife. Leonora sprang forward to meet him. "I am half fearful," she said, "and half bewildered. Not an hour since, they brought me word that many guests had arrived, in most superb attire, to a fête; a fête and banquet in this very mansion. Our friend," she added, turning to Pansa, "received an invitation to pass a quiet evening with my beloved husband and myself. I have not known, my Fiesco! what I should do to please you, the wish to please you being my highest object. The nurse came bustling in, not long ago, affronted that I had not told her of our festivities; then wondering at the plainness of my dress, and bidding me attire myself at once. I sent her to my dressing-room to please her, with orders that my jewels and rich dresses should be laid out in readiness. Others of my women came soon after, saying the courts below were full of armed men. I sent one back, bidding her seek thee, and request thy presence; but she returned at once, and told me we were prisoners, in this, my range of chambers, the great door at the staircase foot having been locked since she had passed it last. We sat down, therefore, to wait in patience, till we knew your pleasure. But you are come, Fiesco, my dear lord! and you will let me hear, from your dear lips, some reason of this mystery. Is there a fête?—some masque, perhaps, intended as a pleasant surprise for me, kindly intended, though I take no pleasure in such poor shows? Is this your masquing suit to night?" she said, and smiled, as the gleam of his armour met her eye, beneath his loose mantle. "Fiesco, my Fiesco! you do not smile; and now I bethink me of those armed soldiers. Say, is there danger to thy person?—are they come to sieze thee for some offence thou never hast committed?—has word or look of thine been construed as an insult against that ancient foe to thee, that would-be tyrant, Giannettino Doria? Speak, for suspense creates a thousand fancies, that you may smile at, but that make me wretched."

Fiesco had stood gravely silent while his wife addressed him; his countenance was grave and full of thought, and his attention seemed all fixed on her; but every now and then, his restless eye glanced on his friend, and

former tutor, Paolo Pansa. As he entered, he had placed a written paper in the hands of Pansa, and when the latter had perused it, and come forward, Fiesco said — "One word will do; you promise not to leave her, you promise to attend to all I ask?"

"I do, I do," said Pansa, slowly, and thoughtfully, and then added, even more deliberately: "I promise most faithfully; but——"

"I have no time, not a moment, for your remonstrances; you have promised, I ask no more. And now, my Leonora, my noble, lovely, injured, Leonora! — injured, for I have wronged you by appearing what I was not, and what you could not love; hear me," he said, with a look of tenderness and a voice of winning sweetness, that contrasted strangely with the stern clank and glitter of his armour (for he had now thrown off his mantel for the last time:) a naked sword was in his hand, for which he wore no scabbard, and daggers in his girdle: — "Hear me, my noble wife: you see me as I am, as I have ever been, under my witting's garb. You see me fulfilling your own wishes, fired with a noble ardour for great deeds, determined to avenge great wrongs. Hear me, when I declare that I have ever loved you above myself, and second only to mine honour. I have loved the print of your small footsteps in the common dust, before the brightest glances of those eyes you thought I basked in. Your words of censure, had they been unkind (and thy were never yet unkind,) would have been sweeter to my ears than the best praises of an angel's tongue. I have now no time for explanations, my sweet Leonora. Fear not for my safety — fear nothing. After one little hour, I shall return." He took her hand and pressed it to his lips. He gently drew her towards him, and kissed her cheek, and then her lips, with one long, fervent kiss. Leonora could not speak; her whole countenance was changed; her whole frame trembled with a strong hysteric agitation. Her lips unclosed, as if to speak and still she did not speak. Gently and pityingly her husband led her to his friend. "With you, my honoured friend, I leave this treasure above all price," he said, in faltering accents.

"Wait, wait a moment," cried the distracted lady; "all you tell me perplexes me, confounds me. Why this haste? Sit down, my husband; let me sit beside thee, and let me hear enough to calm my terror; to stop the throbblings of this heart, that feels as if it would burst my bosom. Stop a little while, not to gratify aught like a woman's idle curiosity; only in pity stop, in gentlest pity!"

Fiesco took the little trembling hands that were so piteously extended to him, in his own. "All depends," he said, "on doing what is to be done, at once; there is no danger but in loss of time. I must not wait to tell you more than this. Within an hour, the influence, the tyranny of the Dorias, will have ceased for ever. Within an hour, Genoa will be free. Within an hour, when I take this hand, 't will be to hail thee, not as the loveliest only, but the first lady in Genoa the Magnificent. No, no, look not so sad, and so affrighted still. There is no danger to your husband, lady, but in delay, and trifling in your chamber. My tarrying here perils my life, for I am losing time. My going forth guards me, preserves me, assures me of the triumph almost in my grasp."

"It may be true," replied the lady, wiping away the tears that fell fast over her pallid face; "it may be true, but I am certain there's to be bloodshedding within this hour, Fiesco. The good old Andrea Doria is to die, and Giannettino, with all his sins full blown and unrepented of; he's to be sent to his great, dread account: they must both be murdered; murdered by treachery, in the silent night. I know that this must happen, and I know not where the dreadful carnage is to end. 'Tis easy to talk of one short hour. It is just as easy to throw a spark into a magazine of gunpowder, and say only a barrel or two shall explode there."

"Sweet Leonora," replied Fiesco, "you are talking, as women sometimes will, of what they know nought."

"Must there not be bloodshedding to night?" she said; "that's all I ask."

"I am already detained too long," he said, with some impatience.

"If you go," she cried, "promise me you will not murder them."

"If I go not at once," he answered, "Genoa will be bound with double fetters, and I shall be murdered at your very feet."

"My Fiesco, my own Fiesco," cried Leonora, tenderly clasping his arm, but shrinking away, when the hard cold armour met her hand: "any thing is better than the cold-blooded murder of those men."

"Leonora, I entreat, I command you to be silent, and let me go. You, you yourself, have oftentimes reproached me with my inglorious life of late. You have often urged me to avenge the honour of this, our Genoa."

"To preserve, but never to avenge it, unkind Fiesco. Openly and manfully to preserve the freedom and the honour of the state."

"Silence!" he cried; "we have had enough of this!"

Leonora fell at his feet, and again entreated him to hear her; but now Fiesco was almost furious: roughly he tore himself away, and with a deep, stern voice, commanded her to speak no more; yet, as he was striding from the chamber, he turned his head, to take one last look at her he loved so well. She was kneeling where he had left her, her hands clasped, her meek, expressive eyes fixed with a look of anguish on the ground. He stopped, and, gazing tenderly upon her, "Forgive my brutal roughness, gentle love," he said.

"One moment, only one moment," she exclaimed, with a trembling voice: "take leave of me, Fiesco. We shall not meet again. Take me to your bosom, and kiss me for the last, last time." She rose up, for Fiesco came towards her. Tenderly he took her in his arms, her head sunk on his shoulder, and once she pressed her lips to his bare throat; but when he raised her, there was no breath upon her pallid lips; her eyes were closed, her graceful arms hung lifeless. Leonora did not recover from that long and deathlike swoon, till the whole Palace was shut up, and quiet as the grave.

The plans of Fiesco had all been made with admirable skill and foresight: every precaution had been taken, every contingency prepared for. In every quarter the most complete success attended his conspiracy. Giannettino was slain at the onset; but the loved and venerable Andrea Doria, though ill and feeble, was carried in safety, by his own faithful domestics, to Masona, a country-seat, about fifteen miles from Genoa. Every quarter of the city was now suddenly in motion, and men of all ranks rose up to terror and dismay. But while to one party every thing wore the aspect of one scene of inextricable confusion, in which the only wise and safe way was to submit to the other party; to Fiesco, and the whole of his conspirators, to whom he had given orders, at once the most minute and the most decided, all was one clear, well-organized, well-working plot.

It is a remarkable fact, that in this celebrated conspiracy, every one had been thought of but the One all-wise disposer of all human events. Every thing had been foreseen but the interference of his wise providence. Fiesco, with all his consummate skill and policy, had probably forgotten that no cause can prosper which is not attended with the blessing of God. Perhaps he felt that there was too much of selfishness, and too much of downright crime, in his well-laid and executed plot, for God to tolerate, who is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity.

It sometimes pleases that often forgotten, often insulted Being, to disconcert, in a very quiet and simple way, all the skilful arrangements of earthly policy.

The dauntless head and chief of this extraordinary conspiracy was already triumphant. His every plan was crowned with wonderful success. His lofty form was seen, his voice was heard, in every quarter. He shouted liberty! and the cry spread like a blazing wild-fire on all sides. Not liberty alone, but Fiesco and liberty, became the cry. Fiesco was seen running to the Port, and, as he ran, shouting liberty. The galley slaves, awakened by the cry, repeated it; and Fiesco seems to have feared lest these convicts should burst their chains and escape. There was a little plank leading from the shore to the galleys. It is supposed that Fiesco's foot slipped in passing along this plank; nothing more was known with certainty. The inquiry, however, began at length to be made, Where is Fiesco? The conspirators waited his further orders. The Senate, who had assembled at the Palace, waited to hear his terms, and even to submit to them. His presence was required and waited for every where, but he appeared not. As the truth broke upon them, the people began to lose their ardour in furthering the conspiracy. That one false step changed the aspect of the whole affair. It was not till the fourth day after the breaking out of the conspiracy that the body of Fiesco was found. His last mortal agonies had met no human eye, his last cries had not been heard. Clogged and forced down by the weight of his heavy armour, he had been drowned.

It was not long after the death of the young and gallant Count of Lavagna, that an aged man entered the church of——, in haste. His countenance was troubled, and he was clad in mourning garments. As he passed along the beautiful but gloomy aisles, he looked from side to side with anxious eyes, as if in search of some one he had lost. He went towards the chapel of the Lavagna family, but came back unsatisfied. At last he stopped. A slight and girlish figure, in the deepest mourning, was kneeling on the pavement in a dark corner of the ancient church: her pale hands were clasped, her eyes timidly raised, and her lips moved in humble prayer. The aged man knelt down, but at some distance, as if fearing to disturb her; and when at length she rose, then he came forward. She turned to greet him, not with smiles, but with a calm and melancholy sweetness, more pleasing than any smiles. She thanked him for his kind anxiety about her; then gently pointing to an old picture, she said, "The painting and the words are nothing; but I have been praying that their lesson may be taught me by the Spirit, and for His blessed sake, my Father! 'He pleased not Himself!'"

THE TWO KATES.

A TALE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE BUCCANEER," ETC.

[From "*The Friendship's Offering*," for 1835.]

"I cannot help observing, Mr. Seymour, that I think it exceedingly strange in you to interfere with the marriage of my daughter : — marry your sons, sir, as you please, — but my daughter ! — that is quite another matter."

And Mrs. Seymour, a stately sedate matron, of the high-heeled and hoop school, drew herself up to her full height, which (without the heels) was five foot seven, — and fanning herself with a huge green fan, more rapidly than she had done for many months, looked askance upon her husband, a pale delicate man, who seemed in the last stage of a consumption.

"A little time, Mary !" (good lack ! could such a person as Mrs. Seymour bear so sweet a name ?) "a little time, Mary, and our sons may marry as they list for me, — but I have yet to learn, why you should have more control over our Kate than I. Before I quit this painful world, I should like the sweet child to be placed under a suitable protector."

"You may well call her child, indeed — little more than sixteen. Forcing the troubles of the world upon her, so young. I have had my share of them Heaven knows, although, I had nearly arrived at an age of discretion before I united my destiny to yours."

"So you had, my dear, — you were, I think, close upon forty !"

It is pretty certain that a woman who numbers thirty without entering "the blessed state," had better deliberate whether she is able to take up new ideas, forego "her own sweet will," and sink from an independent to a dependent being ; but a woman of forty who is guilty of such an absurdity merits the punishment she is sure to receive. And though Mr. Seymour was a kind, amiable, and affectionate man, his lady was far from a happy woman : she had enjoyed more of her own way than generally falls to the lot of her sex, and yet not near so much as she desired or fancied she deserved. If Mr. Seymour would have held his tongue, and done exactly as she wished, it would have been all well ; but this course he was not exactly prone to, — he having been, at least ten years before his marriage, what is generally termed an old bachelor. Let it not be imagined that Mrs. Seymour was one of your "shall and will" ladies, — no such thing ; she was always talking of "female duties," of "gentle obedience," of amiable docility ; and with her eyes fastened upon a piece of tent-stitch which she had worked in her juvenile days, representing Jacob drinking from Rebecca's pitcher, she would lecture her husband by the long winter hours, and the midsummer sunshine, as to the inestimable treasure he possessed in her blessed self.

"Think, Mr. Seymour, if you had married a gad-about ; who would have watched over my children ?" (she never by any chance said *our* children.) — "I have never been outside the doors (except to church) these four years ! — If you had married a termagant, how she would have flown

at, and abused all your little — did I say *little*? I might with truth say, your *great* peculiarities. I never interfere, never; I only notice — for your own good — that habit for instance, of always giving Kate sugar with her strawberries, and placing the tongs on the left instead of the right of the poker — it is very sad!”

“My dear,” Mr. Seymour would interrupt, “what does it signify whether the tongs be to the right or left?”

“Bless me, dear sir, you need not fly out so; I was only saying that there are some women in the world who would make *that* a bone of contention — I never do, much as it annoys *me*, — much as it leads the servants into careless habits, — much as it and other things grieve and worry my health and spirits, — I never complain! never. Some men are strangely insensible to their domestic blessings, and do not know how to value earth’s greatest treasure, — a good wife! but I am dumb; I am content to suffer, to melt away in tears — it is no matter.” Then, after a pause to recruit her breath and complainings, she would rush upon another grievance with the abominable whine of an aggrieved and much injured person, — a sort of mental and monotonous wailing, which though nobody minded, annoyed every body within her sphere. Her husband was fast sinking into his grave; her sons had gone from Eton to Cambridge; and, when they were at home, took good care to be continually out of earshot of their mother’s lamentations; — the servants changed places so continually, that the door was never twice opened by the same footman; — and the only fixture at Seymour Hall, where servants and centuries, at one time, might be almost termed synonymous, was the old deaf housekeeper, who, luckily for herself, could not hear her mistress’s voice. To whom then had Mrs. Seymour to look forward, as the future source of her comforts, — (i. e.) of her tormenting? — even her daughter Kate, — the bonny Kate, — the merry Kate, the thing of smiles and tears, who danced under the shadow of the old trees, — who sang with the birds, — who learned industry from the bees, and cheerfulness from the grasshopper, — whose voice told in its rich full melody of young Joy and his laughing train, — whose step was as light on the turf as the dew or the sunbeam, — whose shadow was blessed as it passed the window of the poor and lowly cottager, heralding the coming of her, who comforted her own soul by comforting her fellow creatures. — “How can it be possible,” said every body, “that such a lovely, cheerful, cheering creature can be the child of Mr. and Mrs. Seymour? — the father, dear man, kind and gentle, but so odd; — the mother!” — and then followed a look and a shrug, that told of much disapprobation, and yet not half as much as was most generously bestowed on the melancholy-dealing Mrs. Seymour.

Kate’s father well knew that his days were numbered; and he looked forward with no very pleasurable feeling to his daughter’s health and happiness being sacrificed at the shrine whereon he had offered up his own. Kate, it is true, as yet had nothing suffered: she managed to hear and laugh at her mother’s repinings, without being rendered gloomy thereby, or giving offence to her mournful and discontented parent. She would, in her own natural and unsophisticated manner, lead her forth into the sunshine, sing her the gayest songs, read to her the most cheerful books, and gather for her the freshest flowers; — and sometimes, even Mrs. Seymour would smile, and be amused, though her heart quickly returned to its bitterness, and her soul to its discontent; but Mr. Seymour knew that this buoyant spirit could not endure for ever, and he sought to save the rose of his existence from the canker that had destroyed him. — She was earnestly beloved by a brave and intelligent officer, who had already distinguished himself, and who hoped to win fresh laurels whenever his country needed his exertions. It would be difficult to define the sort of feeling with which Kate

received his attentions : like all young, *very* young girls, she thought that affection ought to be kept secret from the world, and that it was a very shocking thing to fall in love ;— she consequently vowed and declared to every body, that “ she had no idea of thinking of Major Cavendish ;— that she was too young, much too young to marry ;— that her mamma said so.” She even steeped her little tongue so deeply in love’s natural hypocrisy, as to declare, *but only once*, “ that she hated Major Cavendish.” If he addressed her in company, she was sure to turn away, blush, and chatter most inveterately to her cousin, long Jack Seymour ; if he asked her to sing, she had invariably a sore throat ; and if he asked her to dance, she had sprained her ankle :— it was quite marvellous the quantity of little fibs she invented, whenever Major Cavendish was in the way ; and it is probable that the calm, dignified, and gentlemanly soldier would never have declared his preference for the laughter-loving and provoking Kate, but for one of those little episodes which either make or mar the happiness of life.

I must observe that Kate’s extreme want of resemblance to either her mournful mother or her pale and gentle father, was not more extraordinary than that Major Cavendish, as we have said,— the calm, and dignified Major Cavendish, at six-and-twenty,— should evince so great an affection for the animated and girlish creature, whom four years before his “ declaration,” he had lectured to, and romped with, but no, *not* romped — Major Cavendish was too dignified to romp, or to flirt either,— what shall I call it then ? — laughed ? — yes, he certainly *did* laugh, generally after the most approved English fashion,— his lips separated with a manifest desire to unite again as soon as possible, and his teeth, white and even, appeared to great advantage during the exertion. Nobody thought that, though young and handsome, he would think of marriage, “ he was so grave ;” but on the same principle, I suppose, that the harsh and terrible thunder is the companion of the gay and brilliant lightning, majestic and sober husbands often most desire to have gay and laughing wives. — Now for the episode. Mrs. Seymour had fretted herself to sleep, Mr. Seymour had sunk into his afternoon nap, and Kate stole into her own particular room, to coax something like melody out of a Spanish guitar, the last gift of Major Cavendish ;— the room told of a change, affected by age and circumstances, on the character of its playful mistress. — A very large Dutch baby-house, that had contributed much to her amusement a little time ago, still maintained its station upon its usual pedestal, the little Dutch ladies and gentlemen all in their places, as if they had not been disturbed for some months ; on the same table were battledores, shuttlecocks, and skipping-ropes ; while the table at the other end was covered with English and Italian books, vases of fresh flowers, music, and some richly ornamented boxes, containing many implements that ladies use both for work and drawing ; respectfully apart, stood a reading stand supporting Kate’s bible and prayer-book ; and it was pleasant to observe, that no other books rested upon those holy volumes.

The decorated walls would not have suited the present age, and yet they were covered with embroidery and engravings, and mirrors, and carvings ; — showing a taste not developed, yet existing in the beautiful girl, whose whole powers were devoted to the conquest of some music which she was practising both with skill and patience. There she sat on a low ottoman, her profile thrown into full relief by the back ground, being a curtain of heavy crimson velvet that fell in well-defined folds from a golden arrow in the centre of the architrave,— while summer drapery of white muslin shaded the other side — her features hardly defined, yet exhibiting the tracery of beauty,— her lips, rich, full, and separated, as ever and anon they gave forth a low melodious accompaniment to her thrilling chords. There

she sat, practising like a very good girl, — perfectly unconscious that Major Cavendish was standing outside the window listening to his favourite airs played over and over again ; and he would have listened much longer — but suddenly she paused, and, looking carefully round, drew from her bosom a small case, containing a little group of flowers painted on ivory, which he had given her, and which, poor fellow ! he imagined she cared not for, — because, I suppose, she did not exhibit it in public ! How little does mighty and magnificent man know of the workings of a young girl's heart ! — Well, she looked at the flowers, and a smile bright and beautiful spread over her face, and a blush rose to her cheek, and suffused her brow, — and then it paled away, and her eyes filled with tears. What were her heart's imaginings Cavendish could not say ; but they had called forth a blush, — a smile, — a tear, — love's sweetest tokens, and, forgetting his concealment, he was seated by her side, just as she thrust the little case under the cushion of her ottoman ! — How prettily that blush returned, when Cavendish asked her to sing one of his favourite ballads, — the modest, half-coquetish, half-natural air, with which she said, "I cannot sing, Sir, — I am so very hoarse."

"Indeed, Kate ! you were not hoarse just now."

"How do you know ?"

"I have been outside the window for more than half an hour."

The blush deepened into crimson, — bright glowing crimson, — and her eye unconsciously rested on the spot where her treasure was concealed. He placed his hand on the cushion, and smiled most provokingly, saying, as plainly as gesture could say, — "Fair mistress Kate, I know all about it, you need not look so proud, so shy, — you cannot play the impostor any longer !" but poor Kate burst into tears, — she sobbed, and sobbed heavily and heartily too, when her lover removed the case recounted the songs she had sung, and the feeling with which she had sung them ; and she did try *very hard* to get up a story, about "accident" and "wanting to copy the flowers," — with a heap more of little things that were perfectly untrue ; and Cavendish knew it, for his eyes were now opened ; and after more, far more than the usual repetition of sighs and smiles, and protestations, and illustrations, little Kate *did* say, or perhaps, (for there is ever great uncertainty in these matters,) Cavendish said, "that if papa, or mamma, had no objection — she believed, — she thought, — she even hoped ?" and so the matter terminated ; — and that very evening she sang to her lover his favourite songs ; and her father that night blessed her with so deep, so heartfelt, so tearful a blessing, that little Kate Seymour saw the moon to bed before her eyes were dry.

How heavily upon some do the shadows of life rest ! Those who are born and sheltered on the sunny side of the wall know nothing of them, — they live on sunshine ! they wake to the sunshine — nay, they even sleep in sunshine.

Poor Mr. Seymour, having gained his great object, married, in open defiance of his wife's judgment, his pretty Kate to her devoted Cavendish ; laid his head upon his pillow one night about a month after, with the sound of his lady's complaining voice ringing its changes from bad to worse in his aching ears, — and awoke before that night was passed in another world. Mrs. Seymour had never professed the least possible degree of affection for her husband ; she had never seemed to do so, — never affected it until then. But the truth was, she had started a fresh subject ; — her husband's loss, her husband's virtues, nay her husband's faults, were all new themes ; and she was positively charmed in her own way, at having a fresh cargo of misfortunes freighted for her own especial use : she became animated, and eloquent under her troubles ; and, mingled with her regrets for her "poor dear departed," were innumerable wailings for her daughter's absence.

Kate Cavendish had accompanied her husband during the short deceitful peace of Amiens, to Paris, — and there the beautiful Mrs. Cavendish was distinguished as a wonder “*si amiable*,” — “*si gentille*,” — “*si naïve*,” — “*si magnone* : — the most accomplished of the French court could not be like her, for they had forgotten to be natural ; and the novelty and diffidence of the beautiful English-woman rendered her an object of universal interest. Petted and fêted she certainly was, but not spoiled. She was not insensible to admiration, and yet it was evident to all that she preferred the affectionate attention of her husband to the homage of the whole world ; nor was she ever happy but by his side. — Suddenly the loud warwhoop echoed throughout Europe ; — the First Consul was too ambitious a man to remain at peace with England, — and Major Cavendish had only time to convey his beloved wife to her native country when he was called upon to join his regiment. — Kate Cavendish was no heroine ; she loved her husband with so entire an affection, a love of so yielding, so relying a kind — she leaned her life, her hopes, her very soul upon him, with so perfect a confidence, that to part from him was almost a moral death.

“How shall I think ? — how speak ? — how act, when you are not with me ?” she said ; “how support myself ? — who will instruct me now, in all that is great, and good, and noble ? — who will smile when I am right, who reprove me when I err, and yet reprove so gently that I would rather hear him chide than others praise !” It was in vain to talk to her of glory, honour, or distinction, — was not her husband in her eyes sufficiently glorious, honourable, and distinguished ? whom did she ever see like him ? — she loved him with all the rich, ripe fondness of a young and affectionate heart ; — and truly did she think that heart would break, when he departed. — Youth little knows what hearts can endure ; they little think what they must of necessity go through in this work-a-day world ; they are ill prepared for the trials and turmoils that await the golden as well as the humbler pageant of existence. After-life tells us how wise and well it is that we have no prospect into futurity. Kate Cavendish returned to her mother’s house, without the knowledge of the total change that had come over her thoughts and feelings : her heart’s youth had passed away, though she was still almost a child in years ; and her mother had a new cause for lamentation. Kate was so dull and silent, — so changed ; the green-house might go to wreck and ruin for aught she cared. And she sat a greater number of hours on her father’s grave than she spent in her poor mother’s chamber. This lament was not without foundation : the beautiful Kate Cavendish had fallen into a morbid and careless melancholy that pervaded all her actions ; her very thoughts seemed steeped in sorrow ; and it was happy for her that a new excitement to exertion occurred, when, about five months after her husband’s departure, she became a mother. — Despite Mrs. Seymour’s prognostications, the baby lived and prospered ; and by its papa’s express command was called Kate ; an arrangement which very much tended to the increase of its grand-mamma’s discontent : “It was such a singular mark of disrespect to her not to call it ‘Mary.’”

How full of the true and beautiful manifestations of maternal affection were the letters of Mrs. Cavendish to her husband ; — “little Kate was so very like him, — her lip, her eye, her smile ;” and then, as years passed on, and Major Cavendish had gained a regiment by his bravery, the young mother chronicled her child’s wisdom, — her wit, — her voice, — the very tone of her voice was so like her father’s ! her early love of study — and, during the night watches, in the interval of his long and harassing marches, and his still more desperate engagements, Colonel Cavendish found happiness and consolation in the perusal of the outpourings of his own Kate’s heart and soul. In due time, his second Kate could and did write those mis-shapen characters of affection, pot hooks and hangers, wherein parents,

but only parents, see the promise of perfection : — then came the fair round hand, so *en-bon-point*, with its hair and broad strokes ; — then an epistle in French ; and at last a letter in very neat text, bearing the stamp of authenticity in its diction, and realizing the hopes so raised by his wife's declaration, that "their Kate was all her heart could desire, so like him in all things." The life of Colonel Cavendish continued for some years at full gallop ; days and hours are composed of the same number of seconds, whether passed in the solitude of a cottage or the excitement of a camp ; yet how differently are they numbered, — how *very*, very different is the retrospect.

Had Colonel Cavendish seen his wife, still in her early beauty, with their daughter half sitting half kneeling by her side, the one looking younger, the other older than each really was, he would not have believed it possible that the lovely and intelligent girl could be indeed his child, the child of his young Kate. A series of most provoking, most distressing occurrences had prevented his returning, even on leave to England ; he had been ordered during a long and painful war from place to place, and from country to country, until at last he almost began to despair of ever seeing home again. It was not in the nature of his wife's love to change. And it was a beautiful illustration of woman's constancy, the habitual and affectionate manner in which Mrs. Cavendish referred all things to the remembered feelings and opinions of her absent husband. Poor Mrs. Seymour existed on to spite humanity, discontented and complaining, — a living scourge to goodnature and sympathy, under whatever semblance it appeared, — or perhaps, for the sake of contrast, to show her daughter's many virtues in more glowing colours. The contrast was painful in the extreme ; and no one could avoid feeling for the two Kates, worried as they both were with the unceasing complainings of their woe-working parent. If a month passed without letters arriving from Colonel Cavendish, Mrs. Seymour was sure to tell them "to prepare for the worst," — and concluded her observations, by the enlivening assurance "that she had always been averse to her marriage with a soldier, because she felt assured that if he went away he would never return !"

At last, one of the desolating battles that filled England with widows, and caused multitudes of orphans to weep in our highways, sent agony to the heart of the patient and enduring Kate : the fatal return at the head of the column, "*Colonel Cavendish missing*" — was enough ; he had 'scaped so many perils, not merely victorious but unhurt, that she had in her fondness believed he bore a charmed life ; and were her patience, her watchings, her hopes, to be so rewarded ? was her child fatherless ? and was her heart desolate ? Violent was indeed her grief, and fearful her distraction ; — but it had, like all violent emotion, its reaction ; she hoped on, in the very teeth of her despair ; she was sure he was not dead, — how could he be dead ? — he that had so often escaped, — could it be possible, that at the last he had fallen ? Providence, she persisted, was too merciful to permit such a sorrow to rest upon her and her innocent child ; — and she resolutely resolved not to put on mourning, or display any of the usual tokens of affection, although every one else believed him dead. One of the serjeants of his own regiment had seen him struck to the earth by a French sabre, and immediately after a troop of cavalry rode over the ground, thus leaving no hopes of his escape ; the field of battle in that spot presented the next day a most lamentable spectacle : crushed were those so lately full of life, its hopes and expectations ; they had saturated the field with their life's blood ; the torn standard of England mingled its colours with the standard of France ; no trace of the body of Colonel Cavendish was found ; but his sword, his rifled purse, and portions of his dress were picked up by a young officer, Sir Edmund Russell, who had ever evinced towards him the greatest affection and

friendship. Russell wrote every particular to Mrs. Cavendish, and said, that as he was about to return to England in a few weeks, having obtained sick leave, he would bring the purse and sword of his departed friend with him.

Poor Mrs. Cavendish murmured over the word "*departed*;" paled, shook her head, and then looked up into the face of her own Kate, with a smile beaming with a hope, which certainly her daughter did not feel: — "He is not dead," she repeated; and in the watches of the night, when in her slumbers she had steeped her pillow with tears, she would start, — repeat — "he is not dead." — then sleep again. There was something beautiful and affecting in the warm and earnest love, the perfect friendship existing between this youthful mother and her daughter; it was so unlike the usual tie between parent and child; and yet it was so well cemented, so devoted, so respectful: the second Kate, at fifteen, was more womanly, more resolute, more calm, more capable of thought, than her mother had been at seven-and-twenty; and it was curious to those who note closely the shades of human character, to observe how, at two-and-thirty, Mrs. Cavendish turned for advice and consolation to her high-minded daughter, and leaned upon her for support. Even Mrs. Seymour became in a great degree sensible of her superiority; and felt something like shame, at complaining before her grand-daughter, of the frivolous matters which constituted the list of her misfortunes. The beauty of Miss Cavendish was like her mind, of a lofty bearing, — lofty, not proud. She looked and moved like a young queen; — she was a noble girl; and when Sir Edmund Russell saw her first, he thought, — alas! I cannot tell *all* he thought, — but he certainly "*fell*," as it is termed "*in love*," and nearly forgot the wounds inflicted in the battle field, when he acknowledged to himself the deep and everliving passion he felt for the daughter of his dearest friend.

"It is indeed most happy for your mother," he said to her some days after his arrival at Sydney Hall, — "it is indeed most happy for your mother, that she does not believe what I know to be so true; I think, if she were convinced of your father's death, she would sink into despair."

"Falsehood or false impressions," replied Kate, "sooner or later produce a sort of moral fever, which leaves the patient weakened in body and in mind; — I would rather she knew the worst at once; — despair by its own violence works its own cure."

"Were it you, Miss Cavendish, I should not fear the consequences; but your mother is so soft and gentle in her nature."

"Sir Edmund, — she *knew* my father — lived with him — worshipped him; the knowledge of his existence was the staff of her's; he was the soul of her fair frame. Behold her now, — how beautiful she looks, — those sun-beams resting on her head, and her chiselled features upturned towards heaven, tracing my father's portrait in those fleecy clouds, or amid yonder trees; and do you mark the hectic on her cheek? — Could she believe it, I know she would be better; there's not a stroke upon the bell, there's not an echo of a foot-fall in the great avenue, but she thinks it his; — at night she starts, if but a mouse do creep along the wainscot, or a soft breeze disturb the blossoms of the woodbine that press against our window; and then exclaims, 'I thought it was your father!'"

With such converse, and amid the rich and various beauties of a picturesque, rambling old country house, with its attendant green meadows, pure trout stream, and sylvan grottos, — sometimes with Mrs. Cavendish, sometimes without her, did Kate and Sir Edmund wander, and philosophize, and fall in love.

One autumn evening, Mrs. Seymour, fixing her eyes upon the old tent-stitch screen, said to her daughter, who as usual had been thinking of her husband, —

"Has it ever occurred to you, my dear Kate, that there is likely to be another fool in the family? I say nothing, — thanks to your father's will, I have had this old rambling place left upon my hands for my life, which was a sad drawback; — better he had left it to your brother."

"You might have given it up to Alfred, if you had chosen, long ago," said Mrs. Cavendish, who knew well that, despite her grumbling, her mother loved Sydney Hall as the apple of her eye. "What, and give the world cause to say that I doubted my husband's judgment! — No, — no: I am content to suffer in silence; but do you not perceive that your Kate is making a fool of herself, just as you did, my dear, — falling in love with a soldier, marrying misery, and working disappointment." — More, a great deal more, did the old lady say; but fortunately nobody heard her, for when her daughter perceived that her eyes were safely fixed on the tent-stitch screen, she made her escape, and, as fate would have it, encountered Sir Edmund at the door. — In a few minutes he had told her of his love for her beloved Kate; but though Mrs. Cavendish had freely given her own hand to a soldier, the remembrance of what she had suffered, — of her widowed years, the uncertainty of her present state, anxiety for her child's happiness, a desire, a fear of her future well being, — all rushed upon her with such confusion, that she became too agitated to reply to his entreaties: and he rushed from the chamber, to give her time to compose herself, and to bring another whose entreaties would be added to his own: he returned with Kate, pale, but almost as dignified as ever. Mrs. Cavendish clasped her to her bosom.

"You would not leave me, child, — would not thrust your mother from your heart, and place a stranger there?"

"No, — no," she replied; "Kate's heart is large enough for both."

"And do you love him?"

The maiden hid her face upon her mother's bosom; yet though she blushed, she did not equivocate; but replied in a low firm voice, "Mother, I do."

"Sir Edmund," said the mother, still holding her child to her heart; "I have suffered too much, — too much, to give her to a soldier."

"Mother," whispered Catherine; "yet, for all that you have suffered, for all that you may yet endure, you would not have aught but that soldier husband, were you to wed again!"

No other word passed the lips of the young widow: — again, again, and again, did she press her child to her bosom; then placing her fair hand within Sir Edmund's palm, rushed in an agony of tears to the solitude of her own chamber.

* * * * *

"Hark! how the bells are ringing," said Anne Leafy to Jenny Fleming, as they were placing white roses in their stomachers, and snooding their hair with fair satin riband. — "And saw you ever a brighter morning? — Kate Cavendish will have a blithesome bridal; though I hear that Madam Seymour is very angry, and says no luck will attend this, no more than the last wedding!" The words had hardly passed the young maid's lip's when a bronzed countenance pressed itself amid the roses of the little summer-house in which they sat arranging their little finery, and a rough and travel-soiled man inquired; "Of whom speak ye?"

"Save us!" exclaimed Jenny Fleming, who was a trifle pert. "Save us, master! — why, at the wedding at the Hall, to be sure, — Kate Cavendish's wedding, to be sure; she was moped long enough, for certain, and now is going to marry a brave gentleman, Sir Edmund Russel!" — The stranger turned from the village girls, who, fearful of being late at the church, set away across the garden of the little inn, leaving the wayfarer in quiet possession, but with no one in the dwelling to attend the guests, except a deaf

waiter, who could not hear "the strange gentleman's" questions, and a dumb ostler, who was incapable of replying to them.

* * * *

The youthful bride and the young bridegroom stood together at the altar; and a beautiful sight it was, to see them on the threshold of a new existence. Mrs. Cavendish might be pardoned for that she wept abundantly, — partly tears of memory, partly of hope; — and the ceremony proceeded to the words "If either of you know any impediment;" — when there was a rush, a whirl, a commotion outside the porch, and the stranger of the inn rushed forward, exclaiming — "I know an impediment, — she is mine!"

A blessing upon hoping, trusting, enduring woman! A thousand blessings upon those, who draw consolation from the deepness of despair — the wife was right, — her husband was not dead — and as Colonel Cavendish pressed his own Kate to his bosom, and gazed upon her face, he said — "I am bewildered! — they told me false, — they said Kate Cavendish was to be married! and —"

"And so she is," interrupted Sir Edmund Russel; but from your hand only will I receive her: — are there not two KATES, my old friend?"

What the noble soldier's feelings were, Heaven knows, — no human voice could express them, — no pen write them; — they burst from, and yet were treasured in his heart.

"My child! — that my daughter! — two Kates! — wife and child!" he murmured. Time had galloped with him, and it was long ere he believed that his daughter could be old enough to marry. The villagers from without crowded into the sweet village church, — and moved by the noise, Mrs. Seymour put on her new green spectacles, and stepped forward to where Colonel Cavendish stood trembling between his wife and child; then looking him earnestly in the face, she said, "After all, it is really you? — Bless me! how ill you look! — I never could bear to make people uncomfortable; but if you do not take great care, you will not live a month!"

"I said he was not dead," repeated his gentle wife; "and I said —" but what does it matter what was said? — Kate the second was married; and that evening, after Colonel Cavendish had related his hair breadth 'scapes, and a sad story of imprisonment, again did his wife repeat, "*I said he was not dead!*"

THE DEVOTED.

A TALE OF POLAND.—BY A POLISH REFUGEE.

[From "*The Friendship's Offering*," for 1835.]

[The following narrative was written by a Polish Nobleman, now a refugee in England. It is founded on facts which occurred during the late heroic struggle of his countrymen for independence; in which the writer and his family were distinguished for their patriotic devotion; and, subsequently, not less distinguished for their cruel sufferings from Russian vengeance.—The circumstance of this article having been written in English by a foreigner, may account for some few peculiarities of style.]

I.

DURING the last Polish war with Russia, on the evening of the 28th of March 1831, two horsemen, mounted upon jaded steeds, were seen on the side of the River Bug, in Podolia, making the best of their way towards the hollow road leading into a dark forest, with the view of sheltering themselves from an impending storm. The wind howled fearfully; the rain began to fall in heavy drops; and the thunder, not usual at this season of the year, was heard in the distance in tremendous peals. The elder of the horsemen, wrapped in a large military cloak, gazed in silence for a considerable time on his young companion, whose appearance indicated that he had been recently wounded. His head was bound with linen completely saturated with blood, and his right arm hung in a scarf; while with difficulty he maintained his seat on a horse apparently almost as feeble as himself. At length, the former of the two horsemen broke a long silence by inquiring of the other if he felt himself better, and whether he thought he should be able to reach the castle. The younger, whose person, dress, and demeanour seemed to class him in a higher rank than that of his companion, replied with the condescending familiarity of a master to his vassal: "My honest friend John, think not of my weakness, or the miserable plight in which you now see me; I have still sufficient strength, not only to reach the castle before midnight, but also, should it be necessary, to defend myself against a second surprise of Cossacks. Be assured that to the weakness of my horse the escape of the leader of this band of robbers is to be attributed; and make yourself easy upon this point, that the remainder of these rogues will not be tempted again to attack three, or even two horsemen who bear the badge of Dwernicki."*

"Ah! Lieutenant," replied old John; "it is true that by your hand two Cossacks were slain, and that I assisted in the dispersion of others; but it's a sad pity that our brave Sergeant Przyporski, after having served gloriously in so many wars, in Spain, Italy, and Russia, in Napoleon's time, should at length finish his course in a paltry skirmish with these thieves. He taught them, however, to know the stroke of a Polish sword, which I think, they will not speedily forget; and I believe, had it not been for the

* In the battle of Kurow, on the 4th of March, 1831, some squadrons of cavalry especially distinguished themselves, and were rewarded by General Dwernicki for their gallantry by a mark of honour affixed to their uniforms

Czerkie* with his ianczarka† behind the thicket, who shot him in the breast, you, Lieutenant, would not have been so desperately wounded; and the poor sergeant would perhaps still have lived to harass the enemy upon his karos‡ in many a battle."

"What more is to be said, John? Human destiny is irrevocable; and although Sergeant Przyporski fell in this trifling encounter, he has nevertheless died the death of a hero fighting against the enemies of his country. Glory be to his memory!"

"Amen!" sighed John, deeply affected, and the travellers relapsed once more into silence.

During this conversation, the violence of the storm had increased. The peals of thunder became more loud and awful, — the flashes of lightning were frequent and vivid; while around were heard the sound of the tempest-stricken trees, the fierce howling of the wind, the cries of affrighted beasts, and the hoarse roaring of the river, whose waters, swollen by foaming torrents, and impetuously bearing along fragments of stones, and splinters of riven trees, gave to the scene a terrible grandeur. — Our travellers, however, proceeded, although with the greatest difficulty, in the darkness of the night, through the deep recesses of the forest, unable to distinguish the road; while their horses, weary with their fourth day's journey, during which they had been supplied with but scanty provender, were barely able to sustain their riders, as they stumbled on a path strewn with loose stones, and rendered rugged and uneven by gnarled roots of trees.

After two hours, the storm in some measure subsided, and the silence of the travellers was again interrupted by an observation from old John, who regarded the gradually improving aspect of the road, and the prospect of a more campaign country, as an evidence that they were at last not far from the Castle of L——.

"Thank Heaven for that!" answered Zapolski, the Lieutenant, "for I feel I want strength, and what is worse, our horses can scarcely move their weary limbs."

"Oh! my dear master," answered the other, "do not lose courage. I fancy I already see lights beaming from the castle windows, and although, judging from their apparent distance, we are at least a half a mile§ from a comfortable bed, nevertheless, by the blessing of God, I hope we shall soon find a welcome there. — Come, my poor Tysiu,|| get on; in a short time oats and hay will be your reward for the fatigues of the day. Your Siwosz,¶ Lieutenant, I perceive, is aware of his proximity to a stable, — he raises his ear and walks more boldly; and see my steed has also taken the hint."

Lieutenant Zapolski, although feeble, tickled the side of the Siwosz at this intimation, and in another half-hour our two travellers had halted before the gates of the castle of L——.

II.

In the saloon of the Castle of L——, Count Adolph was sitting at a table, intent on the composition of a list of the names of noblemen devoted to the cause of their common country. His wife, a beautiful and interesting woman, was standing behind his chair, to whom the Count frequently referred for her opinion as he set down the names. His sister, the young

* A savage horde belonging to Russia, who served in the war, like the Cossacks.

† The name of a Turkish musket used commonly by this tribe.

‡ A black horse. — Particular names are commonly given to horses from their colour.

§ A Polish mile is equal to four English miles.

|| The name of a horse which has a star upon his forehead.

¶ A grey horse.

Countess Helena, was occupied with two charming children, whose innocent prattle and childish gambols were insufficient to divert her attention from the important document drawn up by her brother.

At length, Count Adolph, laying down his pen, said in a tone of anxious impatience, "Julia, I can no longer conceal or contain my alarm. The list is now finished: I have no news from your brother Edmund, and I doubt not that the most serious obstacles alone have delayed his messenger. The despatch I received from him a fortnight ago, informed me of a movement of General Dwernicki which was expected directly to take place; and he promised me that on the 27th of March I might expect a messenger conveying directions how to act. Yesterday was the day,—but he has not yet arrived; and I fear either that he has lost his road during the tempest, or that he has been intercepted by the Cossack patrols from the corps of Rüdiger. The important moment is at hand; and yet, ignorant how to proceed, I must remain inactive at home, while my countrymen are shedding their blood for the freedom of our native land. Oh! I regret now that I did not accept the invitation of your brother to proceed to Warsaw, and I envy him his fortune in having taken part in the insurrection from its commencement."

"My dear Adolph!" replied his wife, "your noble heart, animated as it is by a pure feeling of patriotism, must not suffer itself to be impatient or envious. As in the field of battle it is necessary that there should be men with heads to plan and hearts to execute, so also at home, it is no less important that there should be found those who, impelled by no less noble an attachment to their country, will supply the army with men, provisions, arms and ammunition. To this sacred duty you have been faithful; you have performed what every true Pole is bound to do, nor can your own conscience reproach you. The time will soon come, when you also will fight at my brother's side in the national ranks, when you will fulfil the more congenial duty to which your ardour and ambition prompt you. As a woman, I may tremble at the hour of your departure; but as a daughter of Poland I have no right to detain you, nor do I wish to possess it."

At this moment the door of the saloon was opened, and the servant in attendance announced the arrival of two strangers.

"Our messengers, doubtless;—let them be introduced," exclaimed the Count, starting up.

"Zapolski, you are welcome!" he added, as the Lieutenant and John entered the saloon; "we have been anxiously looking for you;" and taking the despatches which the Lieutenant presented to him, he retired to a window and broke the seals with impatience.

The Countess and Helen now approached, and welcomed Zapolski to the castle, while they conducted him to a seat.

"You are wounded!" cried Helen in a tone of anxiety that betrayed a warmer feeling than perhaps she wished to confess even to herself. "Your head is covered with blood."

"Nay, not much," answered Zapolski, smiling faintly; "I may think myself fortunate, all things considered, that it is no worse; but while the Count reads his despatches, I will relate our adventure in the forest. — On the 24th March, at six in the morning, I proceeded from the camp of Zamosc* with Sergeant Przyporski and our honest John here, who was appointed by your brother to take me under his especial protection, being better acquainted than myself with the labyrinths of road that leads to the castle of L—. During three days, notwithstanding the vigilance of the Russian patrols stationed at all points, we succeeded in eluding them, and after the greatest fatigue and danger, riding day and night, and scarcely

* A fortress in Poland, near Volhynia.

halting for refreshment, we entered this afternoon the mountains and woods of B—. We were now confident of being able to reach the castle unmolested, when suddenly we were surrounded by a Cossack patrol consisting of sixteen, and were instantly attacked by these base clans of despots.

"Soon, however, the Polish sword, already accustomed to the taste of the oppressor's blood, opened for itself a free field. Sergeant Przyporski, by his courage and uncommon strength, aided chiefly in the dispersion of these robbers, and we were masters of the day, when a Czerkie, concealing himself behind a tree, shot the brave fellow from his horse, and the rest of the hounds who had begun to fly, returned and attacked us with renewed impetuosity. As I was already wounded, John, like a true guardian, defended me manfully; and perhaps we should have been overcome by the superiority of numbers and strength, had not Heaven, at this instant, sent two huntsmen to our aid; who, being at a short distance, and hearing the noise and explosion of arms, fortunately arrived in time to turn the scale of fortune. At the sight of the woodmen with guns, the Cossacks decamped, losing in their hasty flight from the scene of action one more, who was brought down by the shot of our deliverers. But enough of our petty adventure. I am the bearer to Count Adolph of General Dwernicki's orders, that the noblemen should arm themselves forthwith, and be ready to join him; and that all who are able to deceive the Russian vigilance should reinforce him without delay, and bring with them magazines of provisions for men and horses. The General will move on the first of April from the camp of Zamosc, where the stormy weather and the sickness of his soldiers have detained him so long; and will manage by stratagem to evade the detachment of General Kreutz, and come upon Volhynian ground. Count Edmund transmits his orders in these words; "All men from the castle of L—, and the neighbouring estates, able to bear arms, are to be ready under the command of Count Adolph, whom he begs also to join the national banner,—and that he will conduct them to the corps of General Dwernicki."

"I am infinitely obliged to my brother Edmund," said the Count as he approached, "for trusting me with his men; the invitation was hardly necessary, for I have long anxiously desired to be in the foremost ranks of the defenders of my country."

So saying, Adolph took the arm of the wounded Zapolski, and conducted him from the saloon to the chamber that had been prepared for him.

III.

It is now time that we should give a brief account of Count Edmund O—, whose heroic example had excited his brother-in-law, Adolph, to an active participation in a struggle which was to burst asunder for ever the chains of Russian despotism, or to rivet them more firmly than before.

Count Edmund, having attained that age when, launching into a wider sphere, the soul reflects every new colour presented to it, and opens itself to receive every fresh impression, remained centered in himself, insensible to illusions by which youth is too often deceived. A vague and undefined melancholy incited him to avoid that which is commonly pursued by others. In the midst of noisy and unprofitable society he was lonely and incomprehensible. As a patriot he suffered in his pride and in his sympathies. With a view to draw him out of this absorbing solitude, his family compelled him to travel ere he had yet completed his studies; but on his return home his melancholy and love of solitary meditation again returned, and the spectacle that presented itself of Muscovite tyranny rendering his stay in the capital intolerable, he retired to his estates. Such was his life, when the

revolution of the 29th November, 1830, opened the prospect of a brilliant career to his naturally active and ardent spirit. At the first signal Edmund felt his heart bound with impatience within him, and in an instant he was prepared to abide the issue at all hazards; and having entered the corps of General Dwernicki at the commencement of the war, he had distinguished himself in all the battles fought by that hero.

But the spark of patriotism was by this time fanned into a blaze that illuminated Poland from one extremity to the other, and his summons was scarcely needed to call his vassals to arm themselves in the defence of their country.

Scarcely had the first sunbeams touched the turrets of the castle of L——, when couriers were dispatched to the several noblemen living far and near, to inform them of the message of General Dwernicki and of Count Edmund, respecting the duty they were called upon to perform; and also to the surrounding estates, to summon to the field the brave and patriotic retainers of the latter.

In the castle yard Adolph reviewed the hastily collected peasantry, who had appeared at the first summons, and in a brief speech explained to them the cause of the appeal, and the duty which as Poles they owed to their country.

"Long live our fatherland!" (*Niech Zyje Oycyzna!*) — "we will lay down our lives for her deliverance!" was the simultaneous response of the animated peasantry. And now an unusual alacrity stimulated every inmate of the castle. Some were sent out to capture the wild horses in the Tabuny;* others were busily employed in the armoury cleaning and preparing the arms for immediate use. The young recruits unaccustomed to arms were actively disciplined by old John, grey in battles, and by Count Adolph, who, present every where, communicated courage and energy to all. Some of the women of the castle were industriously preparing small national banners† for the courageous volunteers; while others were occupied in the assortment of lint and linen for the wounded. Throughout the castle the same indefatigable spirit was at work, roused equally by the sacred love of country.

The countess herself was similarly occupied in one of the saloons. Sprung from one of the noblest and most ancient houses of Poland, and brought up in the school of virtue, she had from her earliest youth nourished the expanding germ of hereditary patriotism; and when she passed into the arms of her husband, she found in this her new home the same sentiment and the same examples. Before this great and absorbing political commotion had aroused her to another duty, her life had flowed on even and unruffled; and, in the fervour of youthful and innocent enjoyment, her thoughts had not hitherto been directed to her country's present condition; but the cannon of the 29th November awakened her from her dream of happiness. For a long time, indeed, she had been distinguished among her youthful companions for her national predilections,—but since that memorable day, with what avidity did she treasure up all that she had learned of the ancient glory of Poland! How many burning tears had she shed at the narrative of her country's misfortunes, and the revolting despotism under which it groaned. At such recitals her eyes would flash with indignation; and now, when engaged on the embroidery of a banner destined to lead to battle the company under the command of her husband, she flattered her sanguine heart with hopes of success, and the speedy deliverance of her country from its oppressors.

* Places where the wild horses are found are called by this name.

† The Polish lancers have their lances ornamented with small banners of the national colours, crimson and white.

Apart from the hurried excitement which reigned in the castle of L—, were grief, suffering, and pain. The young and gentle Helen was seated near the restless bed of Zapolski, whose life had been pronounced to be in danger from loss of blood and the inflammation of his wounds; and with the tenderness and watchfulness of a sister she endeavoured to alleviate his pain, and to soothe his impatient and ardent spirit.

IV.

At an early hour on the 13th April, the day fixed for the departure of Count Adolph, a confused sound of mingled voices, and the trampling and neighing of horses were heard in the castle-yard. Volunteers of different ages, recruited under the command of Adolph, and bearing the banner of Count Edmund, waiting with an impatience natural to inexperienced soldiers the signal to march, received with assumed indifference the farewell embraces of their mothers, wives, sisters, friends and children.

In the spacious halls of the castle silence reigned. Count Adolph, impatient to reach the camp of Dwernicki as speedily as possible, and already prepared for departure, could not leave the scenes so dear to him without taking a farewell, perhaps a last one, of his devoted wife. With beating and prophetic heart he stood before the door which conducted to her apartment; and after a pause, with a noiseless step he entered the room, in which he expected to find her still sleeping,—but it was deserted. The astonished Adolph, hastening with agitation through all the apartments and galleries without finding the object of his search, was at length directed by an anxious presentiment towards the castle chapel. As he listened at the door of the sacred place, his ear was struck with the sound of prayer, and recognising the voice of Julia, he approached her in silence. Long did he gaze with deep and fervent love upon this innocent being, kneeling and lost in prayer—this young creature so dear to his heart, and whom the duty of a Pole obliged him to leave, perhaps for ever. At length, the reverie into which he had fallen was broken by the earnest voice of Julia, who, still fancying herself alone, concluded her prayer in these words:—

“Oh! Almighty Being, who readest the hearts of thy creatures, thou seest my soul, and thou knowest all my desires; but if they are not in accordance with thy holy purposes, let not my will but thine be done! Be pleased, nevertheless, O Lord! to hear favourably the humble prayer of thy suppliant creature buried in the dust before thy majesty! Bestow thy blessing upon the Polish cause! Save our dear and unhappy fatherland! Break her chains, and lay bounds to the tyranny of the invading enemy! Keep in thy holy guardianship my beloved Adolph: if, inflamed with the love of country, he rush into the midst of the enemy, guard his life so dear to me; turn away the dangers which menace his days, and deprive not my children so early of their father! Oh! God of my fathers! hear favourably my earnest prayer. Hear the prayer of a true daughter of Poland! If the heart of my Adolph should prove unfaithful to the true interest of his country. . . . Oh! rather receive him to thy mercy!”

“Never shall it prove unfaithful!” interrupted Adolph, deeply affected: “witness that Power to whom you have appealed but now, and who likewise reads this heart, burning with the purest love of my country,—that I will be for ever true to our country’s cause!”

“Dear Adolph! forgive my prayer,” replied Julia: “I know your heart, and that you are one of the noblest of patriots; but sometimes the strongest characters are subdued to human weakness. Not as a wife, but as a Pole I have prayed to God, that in the moment of such weakness, if it should ever chance that irresolution enters your heart, he would rather take you to Himself, than allow you to stain the Polish name with dishonour. Adolph,

you go to fight for the freedom of our common Mother; I know that the fate of war is uncertain, and that in a short time I may remain with my orphans alone; but I will detain you no longer,—I desire not to weaken your courage with a woman's tears! Go, my husband, where honour and duty call every true Pole; be faithful to your country. Yet a few words more: in other countries the days of chivalry are over, but not in Poland; with us a knight is still faithful to his arms and to his love; and even yet we retain the symbols of those former times."

So saying, she took a white scarf from her bosom, and would have given it to her husband; but the woman's affection overcame the courage of the Polish wife; burning tears gushed from her eyes, and for some minutes she yielded up her soul to weakness. At length, rousing her spirits, she bound the sword of Adolph with the scarf moistened by her tears. "Bear it always," she said, "and when you advance to battle, look at this scarf, and remember that the wife who once wore it would not hesitate to give her life for a cause which has already been consecrated by the blood of thousands."

Adolph, pressing her to his bosom, answered her with tears alone, and kneeling before the altar, swore to defend the national banner unto death. But now the beams of the rising sun glancing through the chapel windows, warned him that it was time to commence the march. Julia was the first to terminate a scene so painful to both, and taking him with assumed gaiety by the hand, she conducted him to his sister and children.

Having taken an affectionate leave of Helen, still watching by the bed of the suffering Zapolski, and bestowed a hearty blessing upon his children, Adolph proceeded, accompanied by his wife, to the impatient soldiers. In a short speech, he impressed upon them the duty of Polish warriors, and Julia at its conclusion presented to the small corps a banner worked by her own hand, exhorting them never to forsake this ensign, which was to conduct them to battle. "Let your motto," said she, "be ever, 'Death or Victory!'—rather perish to the last man, than surrender the freedom of your country to the vengeance of the oppressors!" "Long live our fatherland!—our blood, our life,—we are ready to give them for her liberty.—Long live Count Edmund and his honoured sister!—long live Count Adolph!"

While these enthusiastic shouts were yet vibrating in the air, the trumpet sounded the signal to march; and a hundred gallant horsemen, preceded by a hundred and fifty riflemen, issued from the gates of L——.

Julia, in spite of the remonstrances of her husband, mounted a spirited charger, determined to accompany the corps of volunteers a few miles on their march from the castle. Arrived at the place at which it was necessary she should leave them, with heroic calmness, although with a tearful eye, she bade farewell to her husband and his brave companions; imploring in silent prayer, that God might conduct them in safety to their appointed place, and cover their arms with glory.

In a few minutes they had passed from her view,—but she still stood gazing in the direction they had taken, long after they had been lost among the trees and rising mountains beyond. At length, the reverie into which she had fallen, composed equally of fear and hope—fear for the life of her husband and her brother,—and hope for the deliverance of her country—was interrupted by the approach of her attendant with the horses, who informed her that he heard in the distance, and so far as he could judge, in the direction of the castle, frequent explosions and the voice of tumult; imploring her at the same time to leave the place forthwith, where it must be dangerous to remain.

But Julia, occupied with other and more absorbing thoughts, heeded not the advice of her attendant, but advanced deeper into the wood, following,

at attempting to follow, the sounding echo of a song from Adolph's corps—in which she could still distinguish these words, which had been rendered recently familiar to her ear:

Rise, White Eagle,* rise!
 Shake from thy stainless breast
 The black plumes of the foe,
 Who comes to spoil thy nest:
 Rise, White Eagle, rise,
 And bid the ruddy tide of vengeance flow!

With what joyous ecstasy she now gazed. It seemed to her that she still beheld the departing warriors, and with a beating heart she followed them with her prayers. Imagination brought to her heart a fond vision of her country's deliverance,—and already she beheld the dear object of her affection returning crowned with the laurel wreath of victory.—Long did she remain fixed to the spot, lost in a happy unconsciousness of all around, feeling no weariness, and insensible to the flight of time. The approach of evening, however, at length warned her to depart, and turning reluctantly to the anxious servant, she mounted her horse, and in another hour was before the gates of the castle of L——. But what had occurred in the meanwhile?—Let us relate it in another chapter.

V.

Breathless, motionless, and with the cold silence of a statue, Julia stood before the smoking ruins of the Castle of L——. The number of dead bodies, the burning habitations in the vicinity of the castle, too plainly showed that here the rage of the Russian barbarians had been expended. The last sighs of the agonized victims,—the shades of night which now began to invest this scene of destruction, and the horrible howling of the wind, as it caught up the dust and stifling smoke from the ruins, at length aroused her from her stupefaction; a heavy sigh burst from her tortured bosom; and raising her tearless eyes to heaven, she sought consolation from the everlasting God!

The scene before her was sufficient to carry conviction of the fulness of her misfortune; in one glance fancy presented to her a picture of her murdered children, sister and friends; and for once, as she sank upon the earth in agony of soul, the heart of The Devoted forgot that even to this last dreadful sacrifice, her country exacted her willing submission. The faithful servant knelt beside her as she lay, and as one deep and heavy groan burst from her bosom, raised his hands to heaven, and prayed that the strength and consolation of religion might return and tranquilize her soul.

Julia heard the touching appeal, and as she regained her presence of mind, a flood of bitter tears gushed from her eyes, and relieved her over-charged heart.

"Come with me," she murmured, as she arose from the ground; and, entering among the ruins of the castle, her fearful glance sought to discover the remains of her innocent children.—But no—her eye met nothing but the murdered bodies of her vassals and servants, mingled with the carcasses of Russian soldiers,—united in one common death.

At length her ear was struck with a deep groan, and with a beating heart she approached the object from whence proceeded this sign of life. How great was her joy on discovering in the wounded man the faithful John! who, faint with loss of blood, rather than from the dangerous nature of his wound, was in a short time restored to consciousness by her timely assistance.

* The ensign of Poland.

"Tell me,—how came this dreadful carnage?" demanded Julia, as, aided by Casimir, she succeeded in raising the body of the wounded man, which the latter supported in his arms; "let me hear it all; I am calm."

The old soldier heaved a deep sigh, and passed his hand slowly over his brow. "It is a dreadful tale," he said; "prepare to hear the worst, my honoured lady."

"I am prepared," replied the countess—"proceed."

"About an hour after the departure of Count Adolph with his brave company," began John, "General Davidoff, heading a regiment of Cossack dragoons, with four pieces of cannon, came before the castle and summoned it to surrender. But notwithstanding that we were not prepared to resist so great a force, we barricaded the gates, and the forty riflemen whom the Count had left us, commenced instantly a murderous fire. The wounded Zapolski in vain attempted to rise from his bed, eager to partake in the heroic defence made by the brave riflemen, but his weakness denied him that last consolation. In the meanwhile, the Countess Helen, regardless of the storm of Russian balls that whistled around her, like a protecting angel, ran amid the fire, tending the wounded, and animating the exhausted strength of the riflemen. The fight had lasted about two hours, when she was struck by a ball and fell dead upon the ramparts. The riflemen, wearied with their long struggle against such overpowering odds, and having exhausted their ammunition, and lost half of their numbers, at last decided upon surrendering; but Zapolski, to whom the women of the castle communicated from time to time the progress of the combat, hearing of the death of the heroic Countess Helen, and the design of the riflemen, conjured them to carry him in a chair to the court-yard. The remainder of the men still able to fight, at the sight of the sick Zapolski, and at the sound of his inflaming words, roused by a fresh spirit, and shouting, "Long live our fatherland!" rushed with desperate energy upon the foe now entering at the broken gates. But numbers prevailed over courage; the riflemen fell to the last man, and upon their lifeless bodies General Davidoff with his hangmen entered the castle, and having murdered with his own hand the wounded Zapolski, unable to defend himself, and plundered the castle, the villains set fire to the several wings, and with their cannon razed to the ground this ancient refuge of virtue and patriotism."

"And my children—what has befallen them?" interrupted Julia, who had listened with intense and dreadful interest to every word the old soldier uttered. "Before I was struck to the ground," replied John, "while defending the door of the children's room, Sophia, their nurse, with two other women, escaped through the back door of the garden,—but whether they are saved or not, the Lord alone knows!—Let us hope that He has pitied and spared these innocent beings. What further happened I know not; only that, being aroused from my swoon by the fire and smoke surrounding the castle, I exerted all my strength to escape from the dreadful death around me, but, having arrived at the yard, I again fell, and was only by your providential aid restored to life."

Julia wept bitterly at this narrative, and for a moment envied her sister and her friends their heroic death; but speedily calling to mind the duties she still owed to her husband and her country, and not without hope that she might still save her children, she began to reflect in what manner she might best provide for the safety of herself and of her companions.

In a distant part of the park there was a summer-house, not unlikely, from its concealed situation, to have escaped the rage of the besiegers: thither they hastened, and here for the present she hoped to elude discovery.

The sun of the 14th of April illumined as he was wont the surrounding scenery; but what a change presented itself to Julia! Surrounded, the day before, by her children, husband, and friends, to-day deprived of all who

were dear to her heart ; — but, submitting with resignation to the will of God — she prepared to support without a murmur the trials with which He had been pleased to visit her, to prove her patience, and to exalt the virtue of her sacrifice to her country.

During two days, Casimir and old John were employed in endeavouring to discover the children, or at least to obtain some clue to their fate, but without success. Nothing whatever could be ascertained to throw a ray of light upon the probable retreat of these unfortunate beings, and the almost heart-broken mother was fain to rest her only hope upon that Power, which from her earliest youth she had been taught to look up to in all her sorrows and afflictions.

“There is hope still,” — she said with a calm and resigned confidence. — “I may yet reach the camp of General Dwernicki, — there at least I may fulfil the duties of a Polish wife, — there at least I may once more behold my husband — if he yet lives !”

She checked the intrusion of the busy doubt that had come across her brain, and having completed such trifling arrangements as her altered fortune enabled her to make, — alone, but with a strong and unshaken heart, she set out on foot, resolved if possible, and through all obstacles, to reach the camp of Dwernicki.

VI.

In the meanwhile, the brave troops under the command of Adolph, having on their way fallen in with and dispersed several Russian divisions, at length reached the camp of General Dwernicki on the afternoon of the 17th April, bringing as prisoners two adjutants of Dybiez and Rüdiger, the Russian generals. General Dwernicki finding upon the persons of the adjutants certain despatches that discovered the real strength of the enemy, which consisted of nine thousand infantry, five thousand cavalry, and thirty-eight pieces of cannon, resolved to proceed by a shorter route to Dubno, where he expected to meet the Ukraine and Podolian insurgents ; but when he afterwards recollected the strength of Rüdiger, — that he would not be able to conduct his corps on the right side of the Styr, because in the woods on this side it was impossible for cavalry to march, — that the infantry, composed almost entirely of new and unpractised soldiers, would be of little value, — and that, in the mean time, Rüdiger would be able to invest the woods with the columns of his infantry, he determined to wait the enemy's attack in the same place : — and with this view, hoping to conceal his movement, he sent two battalions of infantry with riflemen by the bridge, and posted them in the adjacent wood ; by which he demonstrated an intention of going in reality to Dubno. — His position was tolerably good. The castle of count Cezacki, to whom belonged the town of Boremla, was situated upon an elevation opposite the bridge. The Prince Puzyna, leader of a part of Dwernicki's artillery, placed upon the castle-platform leading to the bridge, two cannon, and two unicorns, with which he fired upon the opposite wood, from whence on the 18th of April, in the morning, the columns of the Russian infantry poured forth ; and under the protection of this fire, the two Polish battalions covered their retreat. After which, the Muscovites carried a heavy battery, and began to fire upon the castle. The marshes which are on both sides of the river, rendered the cavalry useless ; and Dwernicki perceived that this attack was only a false one, and that Rüdiger purposed to commence the attack as from the right side of Berestevzko, or the left of Krasne. — A strong cannonade was kept up during two hours by both parties ; the Russian balls took effect not only upon the infantry who defended the passage of the bridge, and who lost there about a hundred and forty men ; but also upon the castle of Czacki.

— General Dwernicki, who, having but a small force to bring against the enemy, wished not to come to a decisive battle, determined to attack one part of the corps of Rüdiger, stationed near Boremla, and open himself a way to Dubno. But seeing in the afternoon and evening, at the left of his position, the strong Russian columns moving to the village of Stryniki upon Styr; and receiving news on the 19th of April, at sun-rise, that the Muscovites had built a bridge, and prepared themselves to go over, General Dwernicki decided not to derange their passage, but to await them upon a plain, which extended from the village of Stryniki on the left side of the Styr. At twelve o'clock at noon on the 19th of April, the Russians passed the bridge, and approached with all their strength towards the Polish camp, at this moment their artillery began to fire, and the Cossack columns showed themselves from the side of Berestevzko. At this moment General Dwernicki led his troops upon the plain, and placed the cavalry upon a free field in reserve — in the front two squadrons of the 5th regiment of his chasseurs, and both the Cracow squadrons of Kosciuszko, — and farther behind on the right wing, three divisions of the 4th and 2nd regiments of chasseurs, and Poniatowski's Cracow horse; — behind them was the heavy battery of Puzyna; and round the enclosure of a cemetery, were two battalions of infantry which formed the right wing of the line of battle. — The left wing was formed by the light battery of artillery, and three other divisions of cavalry, with the small number of volunteers conducted by Adolph. The bridge of the castle was defended by two cannons, and one battalion of infantry with the L — riflemen. — The last two divisions with two cannon were sent towards the Berestevzko, to keep the body of the Cossacks in check. — Rüdiger having placed upon each wing twelve cannons of great calibre, with numerous cavalry, and in the front his strong columns of infantry, began a terrible fire upon the left Polish wing; which, having resisted for a long time with undaunted coolness, was compelled at last to retire to the left into a valley; but the Russian cannons appearing to direct themselves only upon this wing ceased not to pour their fire upon them. — Dwernicki perceiving this profitable moment, sent Captain Puzyna with his artillery, who, advancing at a gallop, and approaching with his cannons near the Russian battery, put it in great disorder with his well managed fire. Dwernicki at this moment advancing with the four front squadrons, together with the three divisions of the left wing, attacked the remaining battery, but failed on the first onset; the squadrons of the left wing, harassed by the continued charge of the artillery, were thrown into disorder; and unable to resist the second terrible fire, were obliged to retreat. — At the same moment, when these squadrons were retreating in disorder, and when the Russian regiment of Oranian hussars rushed with impetuosity to the charge, the horse of General Dwernicki fell. Surrounded by enemies, and in the greatest danger, he lost not his presence of mind, but with a well known voice called upon the lancers of the 4th regiment, who likewise had begun to retreat. — "How! will you also leave your old general?" — At the sound of his familiar voice, which had led them so often to victory, the retreating lancers ranging themselves under the command of Major Rutkowski, and Count Edmund, — and Adolph leading also forward with unshaken courage the handful of men confided to his trust, — the hussars were driven back, and a fresh horse being brought to the general, he was rescued from danger. — Dwernicki, after having mounted the horse, gathered the cavalry together, and attacked the enemy a second time; and in this instance more successfully. The squadrons, ashamed of their not having from the first kept their place, rushed forward with the greatest impetuosity, cut in pieces the Russian hussars, and seized eight pieces of cannon. At this moment, the Russian reserve cavalry fell upon the Polish ranks, who, in spite of their being four times feebler than the enemy, fought with courage

nearly allied to despair. Count Edmund, in this emergency, performed the duty both of a soldier and an officer; and Adolph, mindful of the vow he had made in the L—— Chapel, never to forsake the national banner till death, folded to his heart the scarf moistened with Julia's tears, rushed furiously upon the foe at the head of his brave companions, and working dreadful carnage among the enemy, sank down at last, pierced with many wounds.

At the sight of their fallen leader, his company, together with a troop of lancers, rushed with fresh despair and irresistible impetuosity upon the masses of Russian Cavalry, and drove them back with tremendous loss. In the meanwhile, Edmund, who, as a guardian angel had watched over the safety of his friend, seeing him fall, and regardless of danger, sprang from his horse and bore him away on his shoulders from the heat of the battle, but alas! all was in vain — Death was already passing over the pale brow of the brave soldier. He pressed the hand of Edmund: "Should you survive this battle," he said faintly, "tell Julia that I died, like a true Pole, fighting for my country."

"She is here!" exclaimed a voice, and Julia sank beside him on her knees — "Oh Adolph! now am I indeed bereft of all on this side heaven."

The dying man raised himself upon his elbows with a violent effort. — "Julia, is it you?" he gasped; "how came you here? — what has happened at L——? — where are my children? — I know it all — they are dead — murdered — butchered — there is no help for Poland — may God comfort thee, my poor wife! — Bless thee, oh my country!"

He fell back at these words into the arms of Edmund. The Count gazed upon his face for a minute — it was sufficient — "He is dead!" he whispered in a choking voice; and with a piercing shriek Julia fell senseless upon the body.

It was a dearly-bought victory that crowned the Polish arms on the 19th of April. As Edmund conveyed his sister to the camp, his mind misgave him as to the final result of the present contest. The most heroic courage must at length give way before overpowering numbers; and the General himself, although astonished at the miraculous issue of the battle just ended, was not unaware of the dangers that beset, and of the fate that perhaps so shortly awaited him.

"This is no place for you, my sister!" urged Edmund, as he endeavoured to offer such poor consolation as was yet left at the present moment. "In Warsaw you may still fulfil the duties required of you as a daughter of Poland — at all events, you may there more safely await the impending crisis."

"Thither, then, will I go," cried Julia, with sudden animation, "even to the last, — deprived of rank — fortune — husband — children — all, — I will yet prove that I am devoted to our fatherland!"

It has become matter of history, and would here be out of place to detail the subsequent operations of General Dwernicki; it may be sufficient to notice that Rüdiger, unable to dislodge the Polish General from an advantageous position he had occupied near the Austrian frontier, in defiance of the law of nations, sent General Berg with many thousand cavalry through the Austrian territory to the rear of the Polish corps. Surrounded on all side, Dwernicki could no longer hesitate, but was compelled to commence a retreat through a byeway into Galicia, trusting that the Austrians would permit them to return to Poland or Podolia. But he consoled himself with this hope in vain! His corps were disarmed — his arms were given up to the Muscovites — and his soldiers, officers, and himself imprisoned in different garrisons, and treated with the most savage barbarity, to the eternal dishonour of the Austrian government.

The loss of Dwernicki and his corps was the first fatal and decisive

blow to the Polish cause, and was deplored by all the sympathising nations of Europe. How much was lost to Poland in this great General, was afterwards shown, when through the whole Polish army ran the universal lament, "That with Dwernicki fortune had left the cause of Poland!"

VII.

It was not with vain and regretful tears that Julia called to mind the present position of her country, in which so many wives and mothers were compelled to the same sacrifice;—remembering the duty which every Polish man and woman were called upon to offer upon the altar of her native land, environed by the most imminent dangers, and in the midst of fatigues and privations of every kind, she at length reached Warsaw. Here, although she took not her place among the intrepid females who fought in the works with their sons and husbands, she nevertheless performed services in the national cause, not less useful, nor less beset with perils. It was in the centre of the hospitals of Warsaw that she proved herself a Polish heroine. Surrounded by the sick and the wounded, she forgot everything but the new duty which she had devoted herself to fulfil; and for five successive months thought of nothing save of binding up their wounds and of alleviating their sufferings. The daughter of O —, the wife of S —, became a humble and an anxious nurse to the brave men of Poland.

When the day of misfortune arrived, the Countess accompanied the Polish army in their retreat to Modlin; and subsequently, taking advantage of the facility her sex afforded of passing through the enemy's army, she profited by it, and set out in search of her beloved children. At length she arrived, after a long and eventful absence, at the spot in which she had passed her happy youth. She had left it in the hope that she might still live to see her country delivered; she returned to it, beholding her country in stronger and closer chains; and as she looked once more upon the ruins of her paternal home, bitter tears gushed forth, and the remembrance of her sorrows returned to her soul in anguish almost too violent to bear.

But Almighty God, pitying her sufferings, rewarded her for her fortitude and for her untiring faith, by giving back her lost children. As she hurried distractedly through the woods surrounding L —, which had once been her own, but which were now the property of the invading tyrant, she at length discovered her children under the care of Sophia their nurse, in the deep forests of B —, secluded from mankind, and at peace, — if solitude may be called peace!

In the meanwhile, Count Edmund, sharing the fate of Dwernicki, entered Galicia with him; but, escaping from the Austrian guard, at length reached Warsaw. After fighting in the bloody battle of Ostroztka, he marched with General Dembinski into Lithuania, and on the unhappy result of the Lithuanian insurrection, he was one in the famous retreat back to Poland. But determining to be ever in the face of the enemy, he entered the active corps of General Rozycki, with whom, after the fall of Warsaw, (his corps being surrounded by the six times greater strength of Rüdiger, and having lost almost half his force) he retreated to Galicia. And now, anxious concerning the fate of his sister, he disguised himself, and reached Podolia, designing to seek her. But here, beholding only the sad remains of fortune and greatness, — and lost in a reverie, whilst gazing upon the scattered ruins of his noble home, he perceived not that he was surrounded by a Russian patrol, who recognising and seizing him, he was sent to Bobouysk, a fortress in Lithuania, where he spent three months in the greatest tortures in the casemates. From thence he was sent on foot with other companions in misfortune to Siberia; but on the third day of his march, he succeeded in eluding the vigilance of his guard, and effected his escape.

Protected by the honest peasantry of Lithuania and Poland, though beset on all sides with the most imminent dangers, he arrived at last once more in Galicia, where, hearing nothing of his ill-fated sister, and fearful of arrest by the Austrian government, he made his escape to France, passing through Hungary, Austria, Italy, Piedmont and Savoy. Here he spent several months ; but unable to tranquillize his mind respecting the fate of his beloved sister, he left that country and again entered Galicia in 1833, whence in disguise he proceeded to Podolia. More fortunate upon this occasion, while forced to conceal himself in the forest from the Russian spies, he accidentally discovered in the woods of B—— a solitary cottage, and recognised in its inmates his unfortunate sister and her children !

The mutual joy occasioned by this propitious meeting having subsided, Edmund taking Julia, her children, the faithful Sophia, and the veteran John, and passing miraculously through the Russian guards, reached Galicia ; and having found a solitary but secure situation in the mountains of Carpathia, — he placed his sister there, and began at last to repose in her society, after so many perils and misfortunes.

But Austrian policy, stimulated by Russian intrigue, did not long permit him to enjoy this tranquil retreat. Hunted by the police, he was compelled to leave his sister once more, and to flee to Carlsbad, disguised as a domestic in the service of a Polish family. There, again scented by the spies, and pursued like a wild beast, he escaped to Saxe ; but the Russian Consul at that place offering a price for his head, compelled him to fly to Hamburgh, where, after living three months, he was again discovered by the Russian blood-hounds ; and in fresh danger of being delivered up, he retired from that impotent city, and escaped to England.

Count Edmund has supported these almost unexampled trials with calmness and resignation, sustained by the conviction that fortitude under misfortune, and devotion to his native land, are duties which he owes to his country and to his God.

At length, upon the hospitable shores of Britain, he has begun to breathe the air of liberty ; and at this moment, from his place of exile, his eye is turned towards the still gloomy aspect of Poland, and he only awaits the first signal to devote himself once more to her freedom.

His sister, the Countess Julia, buried in the mountains of Carpathia, far from the world, and unknown ; scarce able to provide subsistence for herself and children, lingers out her days of privation and of grief. The duties of a mother may, perhaps, sometimes tranquillize the anguish of her soul ; but the annihilation of her country's liberty, — and the destruction of her dearest hopes have sunk into her heart, and saddened her existence for ever.

THE PILOT AND THE PRINCESS.

A SCENE IN THE BOSPHORUS.

FROM THE MANUSCRIPT OF A TRAVELLER.

[From "*The Forget-me-not*," for 1835.]

I HAD agreed for my passage with the captain of a Greek polacre, who was to sail in the evening for Odessa. The polacre was a remarkably pretty bark, but with what the sailors call a roguish look, and, unless I shrewdly misconceived appearances, had played her part among the islands in the days when the sabre did more than the invoice, and Greek captains traded in more matters than they would acknowledge at any custom-house in the Mediterranean. But all was now innocent. The polacre had been purified from all her pirate frolics; her destination was legitimate; and my baggage, valet, and leash of Anatoly greyhounds, were put on board. The cabin was sufficiently small, and I had taken it to myself, with the fair additional stipulation that neither more goods nor passengers should be taken on board than the vessel would be able to carry. The captain, a showy, bronzed, tall Greek, shook me by the hand, in token of being charmed with all my stipulations; pledged himself by the image of the Virgin, which hung prominent and propitious over his forecastle, to fulfil every condition with accuracy unequalled by any navigator of the seas; and finished by promising me a passage worthy of an emperor.

The evening was a June evening of the Mediterranean. This is saying enough for its beauty. But it was besides, an evening of the Ramazan. This, all the world knows, is the only thing wanting to make a Turkish summer evening the perfection of beauty. As I was standing on the quay of the Golden Horn, I heard the evening gun fire from the seraglio, and the whole famous exhibition rapidly followed. Mosque after mosque blazed out in light, as if it were roofed with jewels. Towers hitherto invisible suddenly shot up, like fixed flames of all heights, shapes, and colours. Broad sheets of lamps covered the chief structures of the city, and above them rose and shone the Santa Sophia, like the central coronet in a colossal jewel-chamber. All was glittering, glowing, and magnificent. Above this, the sky was one vast expanse of the deepest violet. Nothing could be more fitted to show off the infinite lustres below. Nature never contrived a lovelier setting for the most brilliant display that could have been wrought by the powers of man.

The wind was now blowing right up the Bosphorus, and I became impatient to begin my voyage. But Captain Callistrato's impatience threw mine totally into the background. He ranted, raved, and flung out his whole vocabulary of sea names upon his crew, his passengers, and all things else within his memory. Yet, to my surprise, there lay our gallant vessel yet with her grapnels to the quay, and her anchor fast in the ooze. As I gazed at the reflection of the moonrise in the mirror of the waters, I hinted to the captain that the first preliminary to movement was connected with hoisting his anchor. He struck his ample forehead in utter astonishment at the stupidity of his crew, and gave instant orders for the handspikes to be in readiness. The orders were echoed and re-echoed round the deck.

Yet, by some singular mischance, neither grapnel nor anchor stirred. After observing his strange neglect to the captain, who instantly darted away to have it rectified, I went down to my cabin. Imagine my indignation. I found it half full already, my trunks occupied as ottomans, a pair of Greek ladies, one or both of whom were said to be dying of a fever, tenants of my cot, and half a dozen long-bearded Osmanlis quietly preparing their pipes for a final treat, before they lay down on their carpets. This was intolerable. It was now my turn to rave. I rushed upon deck, determined to abate the nuisance in the most summary manner, by compelling the captain to clear my cabin of every interloper at once, and to leave Turkish Effendis and Greek Venuses alike on shore. But I was too late for this part of the performance. I found the deck a pile of goods of every kind; the polacre overloaded to such a degree that the first gale would in all probability blow her over; and the captain wringing his hands at 'the trick which had been played upon him by the knavery of his crew.'

But by this time it was night; the grapnels were loose at last; and we were rapidly gliding up the Bosphorus. To put the intruders on shore was, of course, now out of the question. But it was quite another affair to prevent further accessions to their numbers. On the contrary, we had scarcely passed the seraglio half a league, when some confounded accident to our mast compelled the captain to shorten sail. This was instantly taken advantage of by some adventurers on shore; and we were boarded by a felucca containing Greeks enough to have founded a colony. The wrath of the unfortunate captain was boundless. But, by some means or other, all the live stock of the felucca made their footing good. Their bark dropped suddenly away; and we were forced to make the best of our misfortune by that patience which was the virtue of the unlucky.

The night was magnificent, but the moon's horns portended a gale. I had been long enough learning my trade in one of his Britannic Majesty's frigates to know that a gale in the Euxine in an overloaded polacre, with a Greek captain and a deck full of the mongrel population of the suburbs of Constantinople, would be any thing but a matter of amusement. I communicated my notions on the subject to the captain, who received them with every mark of gratitude; was full of regrets, even almost up to the point of anguish, at the incursions which had been made into my cabin; and, on the whole, exhibited such overwhelming sorrow, that I thought it a matter of mere feeling to console him. This I found difficult. Yet he was not incapable of listening to reason; and, when we parted for the night, I left him loaded with obligations. My last advice was, that not another ounce of freightage should be suffered on the deck; for, the moment the vessel felt the wind at the chops of the Bosphorus, the result would probably be our turning mast-head over into the other world.

The dew and the gusts together at length overcame my repugnance to venture into the stifling atmosphere of my cabin, possessed as it was by interlopers; and down I plunged. But what was my astonishment to find that a new invasion had taken place during my absence! Whether the invaders had come through the port-holes or from the moon, they had come invisibly to me; and, as the captain, whom I now roundly tasked with this new infraction of our compact, swore, by all his saints, unexpectedly to him. On my proceeding to the length of telling him that I was not to be swindled by any scoundrel who wore a beard in the Mediterranean, and promising him that half an hour should not elapse from our arrival before the whole affair should be submitted to the consul — a promise which argued nothing but my own absurdity, for it might have cost me a plunge into the bowels of the Black Sea — the gallant Callistrato only protested the more against the ill luck that constantly pursued him. But 'what could a Greek do with those brutes of Turks? If they boarded his vessel, any attempt to

keep them out would be answered by a carbine full of bullets or a push of a poniard. He wished them from his soul, root and branch, in the bottom of the sea. Yet, what was to be done ? He aided his eloquence by wringing his hands, tearing his hair, and, above all, as an evidence of genuine affliction, promising to refund the passage-money the moment we touched the shore. What more could be done by man ? From a Greek, whose soul is beyond that of all others on earth the temple of Mammon, it was miraculous. I now tried the cabin again ; was fortunate enough to reach the door, though not a step further ; found a snoring Turk for my pillow ; and, wrapping myself up in my cloak, waited to be trampled on by the next importation of the disastrous captain.

I might have lain about three hours in the most uneasy of all possible slumbers, dreaming of wrecks, skirmishes with Osmanlis, as tall as the sky, and with sabres flashing like the dog-star ; when, in the midst of a furious sea-fight, in which I was performing prodigies of valour, I felt the imaginary deck quiver under me, and was hoisted into the clouds on a burst of fire, which shook my visionary ship into ten thousand fragments, and sent my gallant crew to the bottom of the blue sea. I awoke, heard a gun fire, and was instantly on my legs, delighted to find, like Clarence, that it was "but a dream," that my ship was but some half dozen Osmanlis, of whom I had made my bed in the dark, the tumult of the heady fight but the rattling of feet on the deck above my head, and the explosion but a musquet fired by some of the crew. But, to sleep was now impossible, and I left the Turks to settle the matter with each other, and went above. There what a scene met my eye ! If I had seen the polacre overloaded before, what was I to make of her now ! She was actually a pile of goods. Stem and stern were equally undistinguishable. The gale was increasing : in half an hour we must be in the Euxine ; and in half a minute after that it was fifty chances to one but that our story was told.

My first business now was to find the captain. But he had, I suppose, exhausted all his pathetics, for he was not to be found. He had ensconced himself among his bales, and he might as well have been looked for in the billows that were now beginning to tumble about us in a sufficient menacing style. As I was rather angrily continuing my search, the mate of the ship, a little Maltese, with shrewd eyes and the air of a humourist, addressed me. "You may as well give over your trouble for the night, sir," said he, "for when the captain does not *choose* to be found, it will not be very easy to find him." — "Is the rascal hanged, drowned, or runaway ?" was my impatient exclamation. "The last should be first," coolly replied the Maltese. "The others may come all in good time. But, if you expect to see Captain Callistrato until the moon is down, and we are fairly out of the Channel —" The speech was concluded with a look which told me at once that the captain was a smuggler. "But this loading — where does it come from, and for what, when the polacre is already at the water's edge ?" was my question. — "Where it comes from," said the mate, "those know best who brought it, honest fellows as they all are ; where it goes to they probably think they know best, for the owners have taken good care to come along with their property. Some is intended for the mountains, some for the Danube, some for Sebastopol, some for Trebizond, but not the value of a piastre of it ever to pass through the hands of a custom-house officer."

The Maltese seemed to enjoy my surprise at this account of his cargo, and proceeded in his communication. "The passengers are as little pleased with the sight of daylight as the captain would now be pleased at the sight of your excellenza pricking him out of one of those bales yonder with the point of your sabre. Some are Jews, some Infidels, some Greeks, and some Italians ; and I'll pledge the chance of my wages for the trip that no two of them differ more than any two galley-slaves in Marseilles ; that if

the whole muster of them were to strip, you would find their history written in the *bastinado* on the feet, or the lash on the back, of every man of the party. And, between ourselves, *carissimo*," said the fellow, with a look of the impudent familiarity that belongs to his countrymen, "the brave Captain Callistrato is as much a —"

Here he was interrupted by a loud voice from the water, hailing the vessel. "What, more passengers!" I exclaimed; "is the captain out of his senses? We cannot find room to stand already."—"He is not accountable for those that are shoved overboard," was the cool reply; "he is paid alike for all. But," as he looked over the side, "this seems a cargo of another calibre." A rope had been already thrown from the felucca which followed us, and a stately Greek, magnificently attired, came up the chains. His arrival had evidently been expected, and the captain now appeared, as if he had started from the sea along with him. A young and very lovely female was next handed up the side, and conducted along the deck to a sofa, which a couple of female attendants covered with cushions and shawls, and where the young beauty was waited on with peculiar attention.

My curiosity was a little roused; and the Maltese, with whom I had become quite confidential, on the approved merit of being a good listener, told me in a whisper, and with a visage worthy of a privy councillor, that our new passenger was no less a personage than the Hospodar of Wallachia. "He was summoned to Constantinople," said he, "to give some account of his proceedings with the Muscovites; in other words, to leave his head and his money in the seraglio. Some unknown friend found means to let him know that to-night was to finish his earthly troubles: and the Greek, perhaps thinking that his share of troubles was not enough yet, hired the polacre at an hour's notice to carry him to Odessa."—"And hired my cabin too, I suppose, among the rest," said I.—"Yes," was the answer. "The captain never refuses money—that is the first point: and, as you paid handsomely, and the Greek paid handsomely also, it would have hurt his feelings to have disappointed either. This, too, accounts for the state of the deck: he would not deprive so many poor fellows of their market for a few scruples of conscience, and so, giving way to his compassion, and pocketing their money, he has fairly left the Turkish custom-house behind, and carries them, smugglers, goods, and all, to the north of his highness the Sultan's line of fire."

A sudden sound of oars interrupted the dialogue. "By our Lady," exclaimed the Maltese, "the officers are on our track! I should not give a ducat for the life of any man among us by sunrise if we suffer them to catch us." The captain was evidently quick-eared to the sound; for I saw the rascal struggling his way, in infinite haste and terror, through the boxes and piles that almost broke in our deck. A blaze of musquetry alongshore, followed by the booming of a heavy gun, showed that the Turkish fort astern was on the *qui vive*. We had nothing for it now but to hoist every strip of canvas, and distance the Moslem if we were able. But the polacre could scarcely move; the sails could not be handed, and the men could not stir upon the deck, from the enormous compilation of merchandize which the roguery of Callistrato had suffered to gather there. I was not totally indifferent to the result, for a Turkish scimitar or knife was not likely to be a very discriminating judge of nationality at midnight. But, even if I were, I should have been made zealous by the evident terrors of the Hospodar's daughter. In moments of general alarm, all the world becomes communicative; and I learned from one of the Greek attendants that there was a little romance mingled with the public part of his highness's flight. A young Italian, an officer in the Austro-Venetian squadron lying in the Propontis for its summer trip up the Mediterranean, had contrived to establish an interest in the heart of the fair Princess; which, as hap-

pens in other cases, was by no means entertained with the same cordiality by her father. A bullet and the scimitar were the promised rewards of the Italian's further attentions ; and the young beauty, disconsolate of course, but not the less handsome for her melancholy, as I could attest, on the visible evidence of her magnificent eyes and lovely expression, was whirled away from Constantinople, never to see her worshipper more.

In the mean time our clumsy attempts to get up the sails proceeded, and, though the wind was now blowing a gale, and we began to feel the swell at the mouth of the Bosphorus, the polacre crept on at a snail's pace, while the Turkish guard-boats were evidently coming up at full gallop. The Hospodar's anxiety was obvious enough, but it was at least within the line of manliness ; but Callistrato was the grand performer of the hour. He was in an agony, and his agony had now the advantage of being perfectly sincere. With such a weight of contraband upon his soul, no man was more likely to be bastinadoed out of the world on his first capture, if he were not sliced like a cucumber by the first Turk who got footing in the polacre. He ranted and raved, recounted all the sins of his life, an extraordinary exhibition of memory ; harangued, whined, wept, and made himself so abjectly ridiculous, that I could not help alternately scorning and laughing at the fellow's depth of distress. I was fully revenged for the plunder of my passage-money. The whole cabin was in the same confusion. Jew and Turk, the sly Smyrniote, whose soul is made of oil and figs, the smooth Peraite, who lives by European robbery in all shapes, and the Rabbi, to whom nothing Christian or Infidel comes amiss, were all gathering up whatever they could abstract most precious from their bags, and preparing plausibilities for the remorseless ears of the Doganieri.

But what was the Englishman doing at this crisis ? Why, nothing ! for what was to be done at midnight, with a vessel which lay like a log upon the water, loaded twenty feet above the side, with all kinds of tumbling packages ; with a craven crew and a half-mad captain ? I took it for granted that our fate was sealed, if ever we ventured outside the Channel ; and as the shot of a Turkish pistol was an easier death than drowning, I was better content to take the latter alternative, if it must come, in the *mêlée*. But the story had now spread to the attendants of the Princess, and the terrors which it excited round the sofa gave a fillip to my expiring gallantry. There was no time for ceremony ; I introduced myself to the Hospodar, acquainted him briefly with the nature of the case, kicked Captain Callistrato out from the centre of a fortification of bales, which I verily believe he was pilfering at the moment ; sent him by the same summary process to the feet of the Hospodar, and there insisted on his surrendering the command of the vessel to his mate. But the Maltese was not ambitious of an honour which promised little more than promotion to the rope or the axe, and he left the affair again in my hands.

The sound of the oars was becoming still more audible ; and even the long phosphoric flash from their stroke was beginning to show itself on the water. They could not be more than a third of a league off ; when, seeing the urgent necessity of coming to some determination on the subject, I held a council with the Hospodar. The point in question was, whether he considered that our being overhauled by the Sultan's barges would be likely to involve himself in any inconvenience. On this view he gave his opinion gallantly and promptly ; that he could not conceive any pursuit to be made after him at so short a notice, and that, on the mere chance, it would be cruel, and even criminal, to expose so many people to the hazard of the Turkish laws.

But this view of the question differed vastly from my own. I ventured to doubt his highness's prudence in trusting anything to the mercy of a gang of Turks, let loose, in the darkness, to do just as they liked with a ship and

cargo. I equally doubted that, if they once found a man of his rank on board, they would not at least detain him until intelligence from the capital had decided his fate; concluding with laying down sailors' law on the case, namely—always to escape where we were not strong enough to fight—and always to fight—where we were not quick enough to escape. In the present instance my advice was—to ask no questions, but fire away, to the last cartridge among us; then to make terms, if we could; and, if we could not, to make up our minds to go to the bottom, all standing. My rough advice was suited to the time: the Hospodar made an oriental obeisance in token of submission, sent to his cabin for his carbine and pistols, and went to take a last embrace, if such it was to be, of his beautiful daughter, who lay like the personification of the Tragic Muse, clasping her hands, and turning her fine eyes alternately on her father and on heaven. The glance decided him, as it might have decided the most inveterate stoic that ever had a stone instead of a heart in his bosom. It perfectly rekindled all my ardour against Turks and Doganieri; and we began a general muster of our military means. The Hospodar drew up the unwilling volunteers, whom I had enlisted under penalty of throwing overboard every man who refused to handle pike or pistol. I gathered the crew, and laboured to set them about working the ship. The first step was, of course, to clear the deck; and my hand was the first to fling a huge toppling bale of Salonica cottons plump into the water. But the howl of wrath and wonder that followed, from every corner of the ship, satisfied me of the metal of which its defenders were made. The crew, to a man, instantly deserted me, and dropped sail and tackle out of their hands. One half ran down into the cabin, and the other fell on their knees before the Virgin and her lantern in the forecabin.

All the work was now at a stand. While I was attempting to force two or three of these slovens to the ropes again, I was surprised by a voice from one of the ports. My first idea was that the Turks had fairly come up with us, and that the affair was to be ended in the national style. But the voice told me that the Doganieri were still at some distance, and that, seeing the vessel in distress, a boat's crew from the pilot-station had come off to inquire what was the matter. Nothing could be more welcome: for the pilots at the mouth of the channel are Greeks, and their help is always to be looked for against the Osmanlis, right or wrong, when it can be given with impunity.

The cause of our embarrassment was briefly communicated to the speaker, a tall and handsome son of the sea, who caught it at once, and recommended our getting off the coast as speedily as possible. Still those con-founded bales were not to be moved by my single hand, and the crew were too busy with their genuflections to assist in the operation. But the pilot-boat settled the whole affair in a moment: at a whistle, a dozen stout fellows sprang up the vessel's side like cats, and began clearing the decks in a masterly style. Away went box and bale, away went trunk and package; all flew over the side with the speed of light, and the polacre began to feel the wind and give way in gallant trim. The pilot next threw his men out upon the rigging; the effect was marvellous, and we soon felt her shoot away like an eagle.

In a few minutes the sound of the oars began to die away, and all that we heard was the rush of our own cutwater through the rising waves. The lightening of the deck was not accomplished without many a growl and many a curse on the part of the owners. But the pilot's crew were formidable fellows, and, if they once fell to, the grumblers might have followed their floating property. I remained looking out for the lighthouse at the entrance, while the pilot went aft, as he said, to ascertain the nearing of the boats in pursuit. But I was speedily startled by the sound of a tumult;

loud voices and the clashing of swords followed. The disturbance, however, was over before I could reach the spot, and I saw the Hospodar issuing from the crowd, sword in hand, and in great agitation. He explained the cause, by saying that he had found the scoundrel pilot actually kneeling at the Princess's feet, kissing her hand, and making the most extravagant declarations of his insolent and unaccountable passion; that, in consequence of his attempt to punish this insolence, the fellow had forced him to draw his scimitar, and that finally, in the struggle, he had been thrown overboard. This was the first hasty version. The Hospodar was in a flame; from him I could learn no more. But the Greek attendants, who kept their senses a little cooler, had recognized in the pilot the Italian lover! — who, it appeared, by his declaration to the lady in that brief interview, had been the conveyancer of the original warning, which prompted the Hospodar's escape, had been watching in his boat off the coast for the passing of the vessel; and, after assisting so effectually in the general escape of the vessel and crew, was to find his career so speedily and cruelly extinguished.

As the story transpired, the general sympathy for the death of this gallant fellow reached even the Hospodar, who now expressed the deepest regret for his rash violence; especially on its being known that the chief purpose of the Italian's coming on board was to tell him that the boats in pursuit were sent expressly to bring *him* back, dead or alive, to wait the Sultan's pleasure. The feeling now took a totally different turn. The proud Greek wrung his hands and tore his beard, at the memory of his intended preserver; wept with his daughter over the sudden death of a being, whom he now characterized as possessing every excellence of man; and wished only that he had a hundred daughters to illustrate his line by a hundred such sons-in-law. But all lamentations were now fruitless; and there was nothing to be done, but to make the best of our way, and fight or fly as we could.

The intelligence of the actual pursuit of the Hospodar had completed my determination; and, taking the helm in my own hand, I steered right for the open sea. But, though we had left our pursuers some leagues behind, a shower of rockets, which fell directly ahead of the polacre, soon taught us that signals fly faster than sails. The gun from the fort had alarmed the shore, and the whole line of guardboats were out in our front to bring us to. Another fit of terror now seized my Mediterranean heroes, and the ropes and carbines were equally dropped together. One or two black-browed knaves, with their hands on their knives, even attempted to get up a mutiny, and it was not till a handspike well applied to the os frontis of the foremost put an end to his oratory for a time, and a few peltings of the round shot that lay at my feet dispersed the rest, that I felt secure against being sent to feed the tunnies for which the strait has been so renowned. This demonstration on my part ended with a solemn promise to blow up the vessel, smugglers and all, on the first disturbance among my rabble of poltroons. The people of the pilot-boat, too, were on my hands. For the Italian, as not one of themselves, they exhibited no extravagant sympathy; but they by no means wished to come into actual contact with the Turkish musquets. There was no time for parley. To a man they went over the side, wished me a lucky escape, and rowed shoreward. The situation was perplexing. But, when I walked towards the spot where the Hospodar, now helpless as a child, according to the custom of oriental repentance, was sitting on the deck with his hands clasped over his brows, and the groupe round his daughter were kneeling, praying, and weeping, in every form of anguish and fear, my wits began to clear a little, and I resolved to try the effect of a piece of that manœuvring which I had learned in the Archipelago.

A swarm of the Turkish boats were now coming up close, yet in their usual clumsy manner of clustering together; but two or three were lying

men of the rest, and about as many more were taking a sweep, evidently to cut off my retreat. On being hailed by the foremost boat to lie-to, I answered that they had only to send an officer on board. This intelligence was received by the Turks with a shout of triumph, for naval victories are rare in their annals; but in my bark the public feeling was directly the reverse. The knaves, whom no persuasion could have hitherto induced to pull a trigger, now bounced with all the angry heroism of Alexanders. I was declared to be the blackest of traitors, the basest of dastards, and openly charged with selling the ship, at a moment when every man in her was ready to resist to the last drop of his blood. Even the Hospodar, roused by the near approach of his fate, and probably still more by the miseries to which his daughter must be exposed, came hastily towards me, and asked, in a voice struggling with emotion, whether I could think of surrendering. I was disrespectful enough to laugh in his face, and, bidding him draw his sword, and cut down the first man who flinched, called upon the Alexanders to stand by me, and fight, at least, till I bade them give in. I still held the helm in my hand. The enemy, a little lulled by the expectation of an easy victory, had laid by their oars, and were preparing to jump on board for a glorious harvest of robbery. They were mistaken, at least, for the time. A single turn of the helm brought the polacre into the very centre of the swarm. The shout was turned into a universal howl of terror. Successive crashes, followed by successive howls, told us that the prow was doing its work in good style; and a scattering of turbans on the waters, and the phosphoric splash of hands striking out for the shore, satisfied me of the success of my stratagem, simple as it was. The cluster was broken, scattered, crushed, and swamped, in five minutes. The shout now was ours, and we bore on for the mouth of the strait with furious speed. Little harm, however, was done, except to the boats, for the Turks swim like fishes, and they were within a few hundred yards of the shore.

I was now the hero. Popularity is a fine thing, and I enjoyed it to the full. Every smuggler on board was ready to die with me. The females came in a transport of gratitude, and flung themselves at my feet. The Hospodar offered me his diamond-hilted poniard; and even the Princess, though dissolved in sorrow, lifted up the lustre of her eyes, and gave me a melancholy moonlight glance of unspeakable gratitude.

But our night's work was not yet over. The boats in rear of the broken cluster were still to be passed; and here came the tug of war. The Turk, fighting in a fleet, is the most helpless of animals, but, fighting alone, is by no means to be despised. An unlucky shift of the wind, at this moment, threw our huge, unwieldy, latine sail aback; and, in the confusion, nothing could prevent the Turks from getting alongside. Of the crews of the three, every man was, in the next minute, creeping up our unfortunate vessel, from stem to stern. Our situation began to be awkward. The night, stormy and dark from the beginning, was now blowing in furious gusts which threatened to send us all to the bottom together, and was as dark as Erebus. An unlucky shot, which went right through the binnacle lantern, next put an end to steerage, and the only light was actually from the sparkles of our cutlasses and daggers. Musquets were out of the question, for, after the first shot or two, the whole affair was hand to hand. The confusion was horrible. Yet, after all, the darkness was perhaps in our favour: for we at least knew something of the ground, and our crew, who would undoubtedly have thrown down their arms at the first sight of an Osmanli in day-light, fell to, by the necessity of the case, and did their business very handsomely. Circumstances make the hero all the world over. The hubbub itself was worth all the drums and trumpets of a royal guard. Every man struck without fear of retaliation; and the point of the Jew pedlar's knife was as sharp as the Janizary's scimitar. Besides, men's blood warms by

this exercise, and the discovery that they could be warriors without being sabred for it on the spot was wonderfully animating. The Turks at last gave way, and between being tossed overboard and leaping overboard, they began to leave us a clear vessel. We should now have sung *Io Pæan*, and left our enemies far on the beam, but for the remnant of the squadron, which we had already run down. The delay occasioned by the fight enabled them to come up, and we found ourselves unexpectedly boarded by a fresh crowd of ruffians. Our resistance on this emergency sorely stripped us of our laurels. Three fourths of our warriors instantly ran down into the cabin or tumbled into the hold. The Hospodar, with two or three Albanians alone, retreated to the poop, where he defended himself desperately. As to remain by the helm was useless, I made my way to him there, luckily found an arm-chest, and, by firing, kept of the enemy for a while. But they seemed to be receiving a continual increase to their numbers, and at length they made a general rush, and completely closed in. A blow on the head brought down the Hospodar, while a shot through my arm disabled me for anything but a looker-on. The appearance of affairs was gloomy. I thought that the time for blowing up was come, if I could but be suffered to creep down to the magazine, and away I went.

But, while I was in the act of stretching away on my hands and feet for the purpose, I heard a wild cry among the crowd of Turks, and felt them scattering and tumbling round me in all directions. Lanterns were now run up to the rigging by a new set of comers, and half a dozen stout fellows were seen hewing their way towards the poop. The Turks, taken by surprise, fell like straws, and the fight was done almost as soon as it had commenced. I now thought no more of the magazine, and made my way back, to see what was become of the Hospodar.

The whole scene was like a theatrical *finale*. There knelt the Italian, with the Hospodar's hand on his head, and the arm of the Hospodar's daughter round his neck. There was no time for etiquette; all was nature. The young officer, when thrown overboard, had swum to the shore, had collected some Genoese, and come up just in time. We certainly owed him our lives; and the Hospodar especially would have been headless in the court of the seraglio within twenty-four hours but for his following us. We were, of course, all gratitude. Even the Jew pedlars voted him a contribution, and Captain Callistrato, creeping out from his rat-hole in the hold, produced his best anker of brandy as a propitiation. The deck was cleared. We dashed into the Euxine. All were happy, Jews, smugglers, and Smyrniotes. The Princess and her hero were the happiest of all; and, three days after, I saw them marching, the handsomest pair in the Russian dominions, to the foot of the high altar at Odessa. The Hospodar had now done with Turkey; the Italian had done with the sea: and the hands of the priest united, in my presence, two hearts which promised as glowingly for long delight as any that ever bound themselves in the golden links of a MARRIAGE FOR LOVE.

ALCMÆON.

THE LAKE OF CANANDAGUA.

BY MRS. TROLLOPE.

[From "*The English Annual*," for 1836.]

TWENTY years ago, the pretty village of Canandagua, in the western part of the state of New York, with its white-washed cottages "bosomed" in acacias and roses, did not exist. But the shores of its beautiful lake had even then one sequestered mansion which might have vied in its sweet loneliness with the fairest dwelling that wood and water ever conspired to adorn. The spot is still one of the most admired in that land of bright air and sunny landscape; but then, it was lovelier still. No staring hotel rose to mar the soft harmony of the scene. The white cottage of Mrs. Hastings, with its festooned portico of flowering creepers, was the only object reflected from the bosom of the lake that showed a trace of human workmanship.

The first feeling on looking at such a dwelling must have been unmixed admiration; the second, perhaps, wonder that any one possessed of the taste and familiarity with the luxuries of social life, which the air of the place indicated, could live so far remote from beings of the same order. But the situation of Mrs. Hastings was such as to make her choice of this residence perfectly natural. Three years before the date of the circumstances about to be related, she had banished herself from her native England, by contracting a marriage so imprudent as to offend every friend she had in the world. The extremely romantic turn of her mind caused her to find attraction in the very circumstances which to her more reasonable friends, made her choice peculiarly objectionable. Mr. Hastings was the natural son of parents who had never acknowledged him: all he possessed was a person pre-eminently handsome, an affectionate heart, and most sweet temper. Some one, he knew not who, had kept him at school till he was seventeen, and then given him a pair of colours. Miss Weyland unfortunately met the young man at a ball, while his uniform was in its first blush and glory. Emboldened by the consciousness of being the most distinguished figure in the room, the young officer ventured to request an introduction, which, under other circumstances, he would never have dreamed of. The consequence was a hasty marriage, and emigration to America.

With better fortune than such imprudence deserved, the two years that their union lasted were like "one long summer's day of idleness and love." Her fortune, which the mature age of twenty-one had placed at her disposal exactly one week before her marriage, sufficed to purchase of the American government three hundred acres on the lovely borders of the Canandagua Lake; and it cleared them, as acres there are seldom cleared; it built them a fairy palace, bought half a score of slaves in the only free country in the world, and put them in possession of enough "American stock" to produce an income of a thousand dollars, which, with the produce of their little farm, made them quite as rich as they wished to be. Their neighbours were few, and widely scattered. At five miles distance, lived a magistrate, (in the language of the country, a squire,) who ground all the corn, and performed most of the marriages

of the district. Three miles farther dwelt an attorney who, whether he could "help it" or not, was assuredly "a special" one. He was appointed by the government to superintend the sale of land, and to collect the tax upon it; he was, moreover, entrusted with the important commission of negotiating for the purchase of an extensive Indian reserve in the neighbourhood, with the chiefs of the nation to whom it belonged.

A few backwoodsmen, the hardy and enterprising pioneers of the vast rush of population which has since spread over the district, were scattered here and there; and amongst them "the Store," whence flowed the heterogeneous multitude of commodities which a hundred shops are thought hardly sufficient to furnish in a city. This important emporium raised an imposing front of yellow planks; and close beside it, in all the splendour of red ochre, stood the no less necessary "public" offering to the hard-worked sons of the forest, their darling luxuries of whiskey and tobacco. Their nearest neighbours, however, were the inhabitants of the Indian village, which was the metropolis of the tribe above-mentioned. They never experienced the slightest inconvenience from the vicinity, but on the contrary carried on a very convenient traffic for venison, wild turkeys, and all the nameless varieties of forest dainties, which the Indians have at their command, with a certainty which might raise a sigh of envy in the most accomplished poachers of the old country. In a word, their existence might be best described by the expressive French phrase, "*il menait une vie bien douce.*" But, alas! at the end of two years, Mr. Hastings died of the autumn fever, so often bred on the enticing shores of an American lake; and his widow was left with nothing to console her, but the persuasion that she had given him two years of happiness in exchange for what seemed like to have been a long life of anxiety and privation.

The first six months after she lost him were spent in heartfelt and unmitigated sorrow; and if those which followed were less melancholy, it was only chance that made them so, by awakening anew that spirit of romance which had placed her in the wilds of America. The winter had passed dismally away; both cold and sorrow had chilled the heart of the solitary widow, and she felt persuaded that nothing could ever again restore the life and lightness of her spirit. But who or what can resist the first burst of the American spring? It comes not, as elsewhere, timidly, fearing the last parting blast of winter; but, bold and vigorous, starts into life and power, and only yields before the scorching splendour of the summer sun. The first time Mrs. Hastings had quitted her solitary hearth since she returned from seeing her young husband laid beneath his favourite chestnut tree, was on a sunny morning, towards the end of April. Had she thought about going out, she would not have had courage to do it; but as she stood at the door of the pretty parlour that opened upon the lawn, she stepped out, rather from the animal instinct which led her to meet the soft breeze that rose from the lake, than from any premeditated hope of finding enjoyment. Yet still she wandered on, and, with a sort of dreamy pleasure, felt the warm air upon her cheek, watched the gentle ripple of the lake, as it almost reached her footpath, and listened, though unconsciously, to the chirping concert which every bough sent forth.

At last she reached a spot, too well remembered to be seen without a pang. It was a lovely nook, at the most distant point of their "clearing," where they had suffered a few acres to retain their original wildness, excepting that, at one point, close upon the border of the lake, poor Hastings had reared a bower for his young wife, which he had delighted to make the prettiest toy in the western wilderness. It was here that, while he amused himself with his fishing-rod, she used to read to him, sing to him, talk to him. Often had the forest rung to the gay laugh of the married lovers; and often in that deep solitude had they repeated to each other

the fond vow that they would not change their leafy paradise for the noblest palace in their native land. Never had she been more thoughtless and fearless of sorrow than the last evening they had passed together there — but within three hours after they quitted it, the young man was laid upon the bed from which he never rose again. Poor Mrs. Hastings sat down before the door, upon the very spot where last she had seen him sit, and her tears flowed abundantly.

While thus sadly occupied, and utterly unmindful of every thing but her sorrow, the sudden sensation of most violent anguish caused her to utter a sharp, loud scream, and almost in the same instant she perceived that a snake had settled on the hand which hung by her side, and that a young Indian girl, springing from among the forest trees, had seized the reptile just below its head, and with gentle dexterity caused it to quit its hold. She saw this, but she saw no more: pain and horror overpowered her, and she fainted. On recovering her senses, she found herself on her own bed, with several of her slaves about her; but the figure which immediately fixed all her attention was that of the young Indian girl who had preserved her. It would be difficult to imagine a prettier picture. Her slight and delicate hands were crossed upon her bosom, her long, glossy, black hair was fastened back behind her head, so as to show the beautiful contour of her face and bust; her features were small, and exquisitely regular; and her eyes, the loveliest in the world, were beaming with the very soul of gentle kindness. The wounded hand had been enveloped with some application that had already eased the pain; and it was evident by the manner in which the negroes stood apart, while the young Indian alone hung over her, that she it was, who had the charge of her at this critical moment.

Had Mrs. Hastings not lived for two years on the borders of an Indian reserve, and thereby become familiar with the dress and figure of her neighbours, she might have been tempted to believe, during the first confused moments of returning reason, that the dark, but lovely girl was some spirit of the woods, who, by her magic touch, had stilled the throbbing agony, which had been the last sensation she was conscious of feeling. But she well knew that the reputation which the Indians bore for skill in herbs, was held in high reverence by the negroes, and doubted not that she now owed her life to the exercise of it. In a voice, feeble from recent suffering, she attempted to express her thanks; but her dark-eyed nurse pressed her finger on her lips, and, with a smile of delighted success, said in broken English, but of most gentle accent, "Lady, no speak." She then tendered her a draught already prepared, and, making a sign to the obedient negroes to leave the room, she closed the curtains around the bed, and placed herself beside it in silent watchfulness. The sure drug did not disappoint her; a long and quiet sleep was its effect; and in a few hours Mrs. Hastings awoke, with no other ill effect from the bite (though a most venomous one) than a trifling degree of stiffness in the arm.

It was impossible to receive so important a service without wishing to reward the author of it; and of all people living, Mrs. Hastings was the least likely to be deficient in such a wish. Her first feeling was the desire to heap favours upon the pretty Yarro, beyond the possibility of her hope or expectation. It was much more easy to do this with a being whose wishes were so humble, and whose knowledge was so limited, than to satisfy the enthusiastic gratitude of her own heart. Yarro was just sixteen, and being an Indian, and the belle of her tribe, may reasonably be supposed to have been fond of finery. She had a darling brother, too, the prince of hunters, the scourge of panthers, and the glory of his race. But Yarro had received more articles of dress than her wigwam could hold; and her brother, Hawkseye, more rifles and ammunition, than he could

stow away; yet still Mrs. Hasting thought she had done nothing for them.

There are some warm hearts, in whom the act of bestowing creates more affection than that of receiving favours. Our English exile was decidedly one of these. She had felt deeply grateful to the young Indian when she recovered from her accident; but after she had petted and loaded her with presents for a week or two, she became so fond of her, that she was never contented in her absence. This arose partly from her own generous and loving nature, and partly from the manifold attractions and amiable qualities of her young favourite. When, in addition to these causes of attachment, it is remembered that Mrs. Hastings was in a state of the most desolate solitude, it will hardly appear surprising, that she should resolve to adopt and educate the pretty Yarro. But here she encountered a difficulty which she did not expect. Hawkseye and Yarro had neither father nor mother—they were all in all to each other; and when she proposed to take the young girl into her family, and treat her as her child, she was answered by two words only, "Hawkseye die!" When the young man was consulted, he steadily refused to give any opinion, and only repeated from time to time, in an accent of perfect tranquillity, "Yarro choose!"

Too affectionate in her own nature to be displeased by the same temper in others, Mrs. Hastings abandoned her project, and contented herself, as well as she might, with a daily visit from her forest friend. Just at this time a circumstance occurred, which not only made a change in the destiny of Yarro, but in that of the whole nation to which she belonged. Mr. Mansel, the attorney who was commissioned by the government to purchase from the Indians the fine tract of country which had been reserved to them in the neighbourhood of Canandagua, had encountered many difficulties in the progress of his undertaking. The tribe he had to deal with were strongly attached to their lands; and he talked to them in vain of the hunters' paradise which the loving-kindness of their great father, the President, had prepared for them on the other side of the great river. Again and again he assembled their chiefs in council; they listened, with the most impenetrable gravity, to the long harangues which Mr. Mansel uttered, and which the accomplished Pawtawako faithful interpreted; but still they only answered, "No."

Mr. Mansel, however, was not a man to submit quietly to seeing the unequalled government of the United States thwarted, contradicted, and discomfited by a few hundreds of Red Indians. If they would not be persuaded in one way, they must in another; the dignity of his country required it, as well as its exchequer; and, moreover, he was to be paid handsomely for the job. At the next meeting in the senate grove of lofty beech trees, under whose shade all national measures were discussed, Mr. Mansel, after expressing his regret at the failure of a negotiation so greatly for their advantage, informed them that he was now come to take his leave, previous to his departure for Washington, whither he was going for the purpose of informing their great father that they had thought proper to refuse his offer. He held out the hand of peace to the chieftains, and waved a courteous adieu to the young men who stood outside the circle of the elders. In return, he received their simple but sincere "Farewell!" He turned to go, and having loosened his horse from the tree to which he had fastened it, he asked two of the most distinguished among them to accompany him to the red tavern, to drink together a cup of peace and good-will, before he set off. To refuse this would have been uncourteous, and, truth to say, unnatural, in an Indian. Two horses were immediately prepared for them, and they set off with the friendly white man.

Though Mr. Mansel did not speak their language with sufficient fluency to use it for an harangue uttered within the shade of the Senate Grove, (for

Mr. Mansel was a distinguished member of Congress, and would not, even among savages, compromise his reputation as an orator,) yet he was sufficiently acquainted with its quaint and simple idiom, to enable him to converse freely with his companions. He did so in a manner the most satisfactory. He spoke of the fame of their fathers, many of whom he mentioned by name; of their skill in the chase, their fleetness in the course: and, as he did it, he looked at the gentle expression of their dark faces, marked the simple and innocent triumph that beamed from their deep-set eyes, listened to the kind feelings of their grateful hearts, and then laughed to think inwardly that such a race should strive to cope with him.

The Indians are said to be cruel in war; and their ferocity is the more conspicuous, because it is exercised in a way unknown in European warfare. It might, perhaps, be difficult to show that war, under any system, did not expose those concerned in it to the same charge. That increasing civilization introduces many courtesies, which, when the field is over, calm the terrors of conquest, is most certain; but were this graceful gilding removed, (which Heaven forbid!) the European soldier would not be much less terrible than the Indian. In peace, no beings, acting from the unchecked impulses of nature, can show more amiable propensities; and were they suffered to remain on earth till the slow, but steadily advancing march of Christianity reached them, they might be added to the fellowship of the nations, giving another proof of the power and the blessings of its influence. But this is not to be. They are driven from their forest kingdoms, like the beasts that perish — not like men who wear the image of their Maker — and this too by a race, who do not (even in fable) pretend to trace their origin from the "Great Spirit."

Another fault attributed to the poor Indians, is their proneness to intoxication. It is hardly fair that this should be urged against them by those who not only offer the cup, but do it with a hand that trembles from the use of it. Most true it is, that intoxication and the art of blasphemous swearing, is all of education that the Red Indians have gained by the proximity of white men. The system pursued by Stephano for the civilisation of Caliban, has been adopted and acted upon, without the slightest deviation, by the citizens of the United States, in their intercourse with the aboriginal possessors of the soil. But these reflections are foreign to the story, and must cease. Before the party reached the red tavern, Mr. Mansel had succeeded in opening completely the easy hearts of his companions, and they followed him into it, with all the fearless confidence of brothers. Rum, whiskey, and tobacco, soon united to entrance their faculties; Mansel continued his cajoleries, and the poor Indians listened to him, till they could hear no more. Soon after the debauch had reached this point, the door of the room was suddenly opened, and the figure of a young Indian, with his hatchet slung across his shoulder, and his rifle in his hand, appeared at it. Hatred and suspicion glared from his dark eye as he fixed it on the startled Mansel. A table stood before him, where, amidst the bottles, pipes, and glasses, he perceived paper, and the implements of writing. A suspicion of the truth flashed upon him. "What you do with this?" he said, taking up the pen, which, still wet with ink, lay upon the table. "I have been writing a letter to my wife, that she may not expect me home to-night," replied the lawyer. "Take some rum: Hawkseye, your uncle there lies fast asleep, you see; but he'll be none the worse when he wakes up, I expect: come, take some rum." Hawkseye, stood silently holding the pen in his hand; the fierce expression of his countenance sunk into a look of the profoundest melancholy. He looked from the pen to his uncle, and then back again to the pen; he took no notice of Mansel, or his offered cup; he spoke not a word, but with the air of a man conquered and heart-broken, he turned, and left the room.

Mrs. Hastings had just entered her breakfast parlour, and was looking from the window in hopes of seeing her young favourite approach, to share, as she had often done, her morning meal, when she perceived — not the light figure she was looking for, but the tall and stately form of Hawkseye. Another glance showed that Yarro followed him, and the next moment they entered the portico together. Yarro looked pale and agitated; but her brother's brow betrayed no passion whatever. "Lady!" he said, "do you love Yarro still?" "Indeed I do, Hawkseye; I love her better every day." "And will you take her for your child?" "Gladly! if you will let me have her." Yarro stood behind him, but said not a word. He turned, and took her hand. "Take her, good lady — love her." The muscles of the firm savage trembled. He turned to go. Then Yarro waked from the trance which seemed to have fallen on her, and, laying her head on his bosom, she uttered in her native tongue some hurried words, whose meaning seemed almost to choke her. Hawkseye saw the wondering look of Mrs. Hastings, and, difficult as it was to him, answered his sister in English. "We must go, Yarro, they have sold the land. Hawkseye not see Yarro's feet torn in the long way. Good lady loves you. The father's bones lie near. Yarro weep by them." — "What does this mean?" said Mrs. Hastings; "are your people going, Hawkseye?" "With to-morrow's sun, or the great father at Washington will hunt them." A livid paleness spread over his face, but it was from passion, not weakness. "Lady! you not the child of that great father; love Yarro! I go with my people; but in six moons come back to see poor Yarro." So saying, and as if fearing longer parley with the weeping girl, he left them. From Yarro, who was beginning to speak English with facility, Mrs. Hastings soon learnt the meaning of this scene. Mansel had contrived to get the mark of the two chieftains affixed to the deed of sale, before credible witnesses; nothing more was necessary to legalise the expulsion of the tribe by violence; and should they refuse to go, they would speedily, as Hawkseye expressed it, be hunted from their grounds. The manner in which this signature had been obtained, being neither new, nor even uncommon, the young Indian had interpreted the scene at the tavern without difficulty.

Before daylight the next morning the chiefs returned to their village, and were soon followed by official information of the deed they had done. It was impossible for an English heart not to mourn over such a transaction, but the success of her darling scheme soon drew Mrs. Hastings' thoughts from every thing but the happiness of having obtained the object of her wishes; nor was it possible that the young Yarro should not soon find consolation amidst the many new pleasures that surrounded her. Great, indeed, was the change in her destiny. Every day, some new acquirement drew her nearer to her patroness, and further from the untought wildness of her forest home. With what eagerness did she enter upon her new, strange, but most delightful studies. She began learning to read, to write, to sew; but what was far beyond all else, as to the progress she made, and the delight she received from it, was the study of music. Of all Mrs. Hastings' numerous young-lady-like acquirements, music was the only one which she had not abandoned; and to teach the docile Yarro how to modulate her sweet and powerful voice, now became almost her only occupation.

It was about two months after Yarro had taken up her residence with Mrs. Hastings, that Colonel Weyland, her youngest brother, and the only one of her family who had taken any notice of her since her marriage, arrived with his regiment in America. At the conclusion of the peace, which soon followed, he obtained leave of absence, and set off from New Orleans to visit his widowed sister on the Canadagua lake. He arrived

at her remote but beautiful residence on the evening of a sultry day, and meeting a negro servant at the gate which opened upon the lawn, he dismounted, and commending his weary horse to his care, directed his steps to the open windows of an apartment through which a stream of light issued.

The sound of a rich and most sweet female voice singing, caused him to pause for a few moments in the portico before he entered. His sister sung, and sung well, but that voice was not hers. He drew near to the open window, and, sheltered by the profuse foliage of a magnolia, ventured to reconnoitre the apartment, in the hope of seeing the female whose voice had so enchanted him. Immediately opposite the window was his sister, seated at the pianoforte, with her fingers on the keys, as if in the act of playing—but no sound proceeded from the instrument. She was looking up in the face of Yarro, who stood beside her, pouring forth such a volume of delicious sound, as appeared either to defy her attempt at accompaniment, or so completely to engross her attention as to rob her of the power of continuing it. And the person of her who sung—how did it strike him? Perfectly unlike any form of beauty with which the young officer was familiar, yet, as he fancied, lovelier far than all others, she stood before him more like the creation of a dream, than an object seen in the sober reality of day.

Mrs. Hastings, who had not yet lost the fanciful romance of her character, delighted to dress her favourite so as best to set off her uncommon beauty, and at the same time, by the whimsical style of the costume, to give her that foreign air, which, by showing she was not of the same race as her fair countrywomen, should prevent any comparisons being drawn to the disadvantage of her olive skin. Many an idle hour had she amused in planning and making the dresses of Yarro, and many more in admiring her young and graceful figure, after she had adorned it according to her fancy.

Some minutes elapsed before Colonel Weyland could break the spell that held him. At length the song ceased; Mrs. Hastings exclaimed with the energy of real pleasure, "delightful," and her brother entered, repeating with equal sincerity, "delightful indeed!" "Dearest Harriet," he continued, "it is indeed a pleasure to see you once again, and still more to see you looking so well, and engaged so pleasantly."

Mrs. Hastings knew that it was her brother's intention to visit her before he returned to England, but she had not expected him so soon. The sudden emotion occasioned by his unexpected entrance, and the many sad recollections that crowded upon her as she looked at him, for a few moments quite overpowered her. She rose to meet him, but her limbs would hardly support her, and she dropped upon a sofa, not fainting, but trembling and hysterical. The frightened Yarro knelt before her, and loosened her dress, while Colonel Weyland sat down beside her, and by his affectionate caresses endeavoured to restore her composure. While they were thus occupied, Yarro looked up anxiously to the face of her friend, and in doing so encountered the gaze of her brother. One must have seen the melting softness of young Indian eyes to conceive their power. Not all the dazzling fairness of an English skin, not all the blue brilliance of an English eye, nor yet the graceful ringlets of the light brown hair, could send to the soul such a sense of beauty, as one glance of Yarro's full dark eye.

Tales of love have been so often told, that they will grow tedious, notwithstanding the endless variety of circumstances which may make each one appear something unlike the rest. Colonel Weyland scarcely remained a month with his sister, but that short period sufficed to create, nourish, and ripen to the strength of passion, the unbounded admiration he had conceived for the young Indian the first hour he saw her. Mrs. Hastings was not slow to perceive the state of her brother's heart; but far from opposing

an attachment which the rest of his family would have treated as the vilest degradation, or the most wild insanity, she used her utmost efforts to promote it. Her fanciful brain immediately suggested the idea of her brother's marrying her protégée, and continuing with her for ever. With much unnecessary skill she displayed all the thousand nameless graces of her innocent Yarro. She made her dance, she made her sing, she made her utter in her matchless voice, and in tones of the deepest feeling, the most impassioned poetry. It was her hand that scattered over the breakfast table the richly-scented flowers of the garden; it was she who presented to him, beneath the shadow of the locust trees that bordered the lake, the cool sangaree, or the refreshing water-melon.

The young soldier felt as if spell-bound in a fairy palace. Every object seemed to aid the intoxication of his senses. The soft well-shaded lawn, the bright and tranquil lake, the sedulous attention of the quiet slaves, the music, the poetry, the beauty of Yarro, for ever before him; the gentle kindness, and renewed affection of the long-lost companion of his childhood, all seemed to "lap him in Elysium." Perhaps the very consciousness of the seductive softness of the scene awakened in Colonel Weyland a salutary fear of himself. He was completely a gentleman and a man of honour. The first prevented him from ever thinking for a moment of making the young Indian his wife, and the last gave him strength to fly, before he had poisoned for ever his own peace, by destroying her innocence. Yet it was not without a most painful struggle that he tore himself away. His prudence had not always been so much stronger than his feelings, as to prevent his sometimes forgetting for a moment the restraint he had imposed upon himself. He feared, and with reason, that he had not always concealed his passion from the object of it, and it was almost impossible not to look into those gentle eyes to discover if it were returned. Alas! he could not doubt it, and his wayward but generous heart felt as much pain as pleasure in the discovery. He felt that it was time to go, but could not endure to pain a sister, whom he should probably never see again, by shortening the period he had named for his stay. Five days only of it remained, when the brother of Yarro was seen by Mrs. Hastings crossing with his firm and measured stride the path to the house. His appearance was much changed. He no longer wore the dress and the arms of his tribe, but was wrapped in a garment, something between a coat and a jacket, which, from being much too large, gave him the appearance of thinness and misery. His lank and sable locks hung down below an old beaver hat, which was pulled forward over his eyes, and his whole person spoke poverty and suffering. Mrs. Hastings made an exclamation which caused Yarro to raise her eyes from her work: they followed those of her friend, and met the object which had produced it. For one short moment the change baffled the partial eye of affection. "No! it could not be Hawkseye," but the next saw her spring through the open window into the arms of her brother. Mrs. Hastings stepped out to greet him; the Colonel followed. Yarro, with that feeling so constantly found in affectionate tempers, of wishing that all they love should love each other, took the hand of her brother, and led him to Colonel Weyland. There was much that was excellent in Colonel Weyland, but there was also a little touch of the world's hardness. He did not take the hand of Hawkseye, though he saw that the innocent Yarro expected that he should—but he knew not the sick pang of wounded affection which this slight would give her. She turned from him, and still holding the hand of her brother, went up to Mrs. Hastings and said, "The wigwam still stands, and I pass the day with Hawkseye." She kissed the hand of Mrs. Hastings, and still holding fast to her brother, retreated by the path which led to the forest. It is not necessary to repeat the sad occurrences of poor Hawkseye's life since he left his home, it is enough to say that the gentle

Yarro forgot herself, and all her own engrossing feelings, while listening to him.

Meanwhile, Colonel Weyland took a solitary walk, in which he communed deeply with himself. The parting glance of Yarro pierced to his very heart — so fond, so gentle, yet so reproachful. And Oh! that dreadful brother! The very moment that he felt her power most, was that in which he was more than ever revolted by the idea of her condition. "I must see her no more," he exclaimed; while the life-blood almost stopped, as he made the resolution. "To bid her farewell would kill me!" With a hurried step he hastened back to his sister. "Harriet! forgive me the two days I take from my promised month; but reasons of great importance oblige me to leave you directly; it is better for us both that our parting should be shortened. Would I could persuade you to return to England with me." "Talk not of it, Frederick," she replied, "I am here, if not monarch of all I survey, at least of the one only spot that is dear to me. Already forgotten by the world, why should I force myself and my sorrows upon its sympathy; and Yarro, Frederick, do you think that I too could leave her?" The young man turned his head aside, but could not avoid the searching eye of his sister: he therefore took courage to meet it, and looking steadily, but mournfully at her, he replied, "I will not blame you, Harriet, for the fearfully strong temptation you have thrown in my way, neither do you blame me for having resisted it; rather join me in thanking heaven that I alone am the sufferer; and now farewell! God bless you, dear sister, and since you will not return to us, may you find all the happiness in the society of Yarro — that I could dream, but dare not think, of." Having uttered these words, he quitted the room, and leaving all other cares of departure to his servant, mounted his horse, and rode sadly and and heavily away.

The eyes of Mrs. Hastings were still wet with the tears this parting had cost her, when Yarro returned. She looked round the room anxiously. "Where is he?" she said. "Gone, Yarro, gone for ever!" Bitterly did the feeling of self-reproach follow this hasty avowal. The poor girl turned deadly pale, and, after the struggle of a moment, fell senseless to the ground. With tenderest care the imprudent Mrs. Hastings watched her returning senses, and conscious, too late, of the mischief she had caused, sat silently rubbing her temples, and pressing her cold hands, determined to utter no word that should pain or delude her farther. A very few moments sufficed to restore the startled faculties of this child of the forest. The sudden blow had stunned her, but she had nerves, strong to endure; and kissing the hands which caressed her, she rose from the ground, and stood motionless and calm, like the silken lily after the hurricane has swept over it. She meant to speak, but for a minute or two felt it was impossible. A short low sob struck the ear of Mrs. Hastings. "Yarro, dearest Yarro!" she said, in accents of the tenderest pity. "I have walked far with my brother," she replied, "and I am weary; but I shall be better when I have slept. May I lie down on my own dear little white bed?" "I will lead you to it, my love," said her repentant friend. "No, no, not so, I must go alone." She did so, and did not appear again till her usual hour of descending on the following morning. She then employed herself in executing her daily task of placing fresh flowers in the room. This done, she approached Mrs. Hastings, and lying a hand on either shoulder, "she fell to such perusal of her face, as she would draw it." Then she kissed her forehead once, twice, thrice. "I must go to see my poor brother," she said. "Bring him here, dear Yarro," replied her friend. Yarro shook her head. "I will tell him," she said, and departed. She sought the sacred spot that sheltered the bones of their father, and Hawkseye stood there, not in his usual attitude, which was leaning upon

his rifle, but with his arms "folded in that sad knot," which marks a dejected spirit. She sat down on the ground beside him, and made a sign that he too should sit. He did so, and the tender and pitying glance with which each read sorrow in the eyes of the other, softened their hearts. The tears of both flowed freely. "You look ill, Yarro," said her brother. "Yes, Hawkseye, I am ill — sick, sick to death; come with me, Hawkseye, to the water's edge;" and hand in hand they reached the water's edge.

They climbed a rising bank, one point of which juttied out over the lake; and here again the brother and sister sat down, side by side. For some time they sat looking at the beautiful expanse in silence. There is a passive quietness in the manners of the Indian race, both male and female, which lead many to believe that they are passionless and cold in temperament. But this manner is like the snow that covers Etna. Yarro loved the young Englishman with a fervour which happily his fair-haired countrywomen are not very apt to feel, and of which, in her case, he had not the slightest idea. Had he suspected it, his task would have been more difficult. She worshipped the ground over which his feet passed: the air he breathed was hallowed; the words he had spoken, and the songs he had listened to, were incantations of most blessed power, muttered a thousand times through the long nights that parted them. She had watched, with beating heart, the passion that flashed brighter and brighter from her lover's eyes, and smiled aside as her heart foretold the rapture of the moment when his tongue should find courage to utter it. No shade of fear mixed with her fond impatience. He loves as I do, sounded within her heart, every time their eyes encountered — and that was so often, that confidence was only strengthened by delay. The destruction of this delicious dream withered her very soul: she could not bear it Yarro turned her eyes from the bright bosom of the placid lake, to the melancholy face of her brother. "Son of my father," said she, pointing to the water, "let me rest in peace!" The stout hunter trembled, and springing to his feet, caught his sister in his arms, and endeavoured to carry her from the spot. "Hawkseye! — I cannot go! Brother! a gnawing serpent eats my heart — will you not help me?"

"Yarro! my dear Yarro!" "Look at that cool, smooth water, brother, and let me rest beneath it." "No, Yarro! no." "By our father's spirit, deny me not — I pant — I thirst for it. Farewell, my father's son!" With sudden quickness she eluded his grasp, and the next moment the parting waves received her. He heard the splashing sound, and bent over the cliff from whence she sprung; but already had the peaceful waves closed over, and the aching heart of Yarro beat no more. The Indian watched the spot, till the last ripple of the waters died away; then turned away, to begin again the weary pilgrimage, which was to take him to a dwelling that was not his home, and to a land he loved not.

Mrs. Hastings returned to England with Colonel Weyland. She soon after married; so also did her brother. But neither of them ever forgot the Lake of Canandagua.

THE FORCED MARRIAGE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF THE "ISLAND BRIDE."

[From "The English Annual," for 1835.]

The evening was dark and chill. Gertrude Fielding strolled pensive, along the avenue that led to her home, a neat parsonage house in the parish of —, of which her father was the vicar. Ideas at once ominous and dispiriting poured rapidly through her mind as she approached the door. A throes of the fiercest anguish was felt at her heart when she directed her thoughts onward to the morrow, which was to see her a bride — but of whom? Of a man whom she loathed, yet had consented to espouse, in order to evade the frightful alternative of a father's curse.

Her affianced suitor was a bachelor of immense wealth, but old, ungainly, and without a single virtue to balance these two latter disadvantages; while she was poor indeed, but young, beautiful, and innocent. Her sordid parent had readily embraced the offer of a wealthy debauchee, calculating, in the selfishness of his ambition, that such a connexion would confer upon himself an importance from the coveted enjoyment of which his narrow means had hitherto debarred him, and prove at the same time a stepping-stone to the advancement of his younger children, of whom he had several, and of which his quiver was not yet full. Poor Gertrude was to be immolated upon the altar of interest, a shrine upon which far worse than pagan sacrifices are frequently offered. She looked forward to the moment which was to unite her to a withered but wealthy sensualist, with a feeling little short of feverish disgust. She repaired early to her chamber, her temples throbbing, and the whole mass of her blood bounding through her frame, as if the "great deep" of the heart was "broken up" and a deluge was pouring through every vein, and threw herself upon her bed with a sigh so deep and poignant, that it seemed as though the very soul had been suddenly forced from the fair tenement in which it was enshrined, by one fierce convulsion of concentrated agony.

The stars were bright in the heavens, but her destiny was dim and clouded. They appeared only as heavenly mockers of earthly woe. She had ceased to weep, to sigh, to murmur. Her sufferings were too acute for tears, for sighs, for murmurings; hers were the silent, unseen, absorbing agonies of despair. She did not sleep, or, if her senses were for a moment "lapped in oblivion," frightful dreams interrupted her slumbers, and she started from her pillow with the perturbation of bewildered horror, which too plainly told the intensity of her soul's emotions.

On the following morning, pale and unrefreshed, with forebodings that struck like so many ice-bolts through her heart, she descended to the parlor, where a tolerably splendid breakfast was provided for those friends who had been invited to the wedding, and who shortly after assembled. The bridegroom was the last to make his appearance, but his bodily infirmities might have been fairly pleaded as his excuse; still he did not take advantage of a plea so extremely natural in an aged beau, though not very flattering either to his bride's choice or to his own discretion. Gertrude was dressed without a single ornament except a white rose in her hair, which she wore at the express desire of her mother; and though the suitor had

presented her with sundry jewels and various expensive trinkets, they remained in their cases, to her worse than valueless, as they were mementos of a sacrifice that would taint the pure spring of her existence, and make it henceforth gush from its troubled fountain, charged with the bitters of "gall and wormwood." Her eyes were dim with weeping. She saluted her friends mournfully, while her father affected a boisterous mirth that strikingly contrasted with the deep solemn gloom which was fixed upon his daughter's cheek, like an icicle upon the opening primrose.

When the bridegroom was announced, Mr. Fielding darted towards the door to assist him from his carriage, from which he descended with some difficulty, and a few grimaces, and then hobbled into the room with all the decrepit agility of threescore and six, augmented by a life of early debauchery and continued indulgence. He was dressed with the elaborate gaiety of a confirmed "man of the town;" his legs, which from the inclination of his head towards the horizon, formed almost a right angle with his upper man, were forced into a pair of light web pantaloons that showed to a miracle the prodigious preponderancy of skin and bone over flesh and blood. He shuffled towards the bride with a disgusting chuckle of delight, and courteously kissed her forehead; but she shrank from his contaminating touch with an instinctive loathing, and was about to evade the revolting caress, when her father's frown chocked her. She passively submitted to the endearments of the senile representative of manhood with whom she was doomed to link her destiny.

The marriage ceremony was performed by the bride's father. Pale, yet with a firm step and calm self-possession, she approached the altar, but when she was required to repeat the solemn declaration of conjugal fidelity and affection, her voice faltered, and, in spite of the natural energy of her resolution, she could scarcely articulate the customary obligation. She had, however, wound up her lacerated spirit to a pitch of determination which enabled her to go through the awful ceremony, though as soon as it was finished, the tension of her mind, which had been too high, was instantly relaxed, and, overcome by her feelings, she fell back upon the cold stones of the chancel. The poor emaciated bridegroom hobbled about in a paroxysm of distress, attributing to any cause but the right, what he termed her extraordinary emotion. A little water and hartshorn soon restored the unhappy Gertrude to consciousness and to misery. With a trifling exertion of her moral energies she shortly recovered her self-possession, signed for the last time her maiden name in the parish register, and left the church with a heart less heavy than when she entered it, as the die was now cast, and the climax of agony had been endured.

She returned to her father's house, took a melancholy farewell of her family, and entering a splendid carriage drawn by four blood bays, set off with her venerable husband for his magnificent mansion in a distant county. It was anything but a lively journey. The exertion of travelling seemed to affect the old gentleman greatly, for he had only arrived the night before at the town of —, about six miles from the vicarage of his bride's father, and so long a journey had sadly discomposed his shattered and attenuated frame. In spite of his professed joy at the possession of a young and beautiful wife, he frequently complained of fatigue, of stiffness in his limbs, and expressed a querulous desire to be at his journey's end; while Gertrude, little disposed to take part in a conversation of any kind, much less in one which had his inconveniences alone for its subject, and feeling besides little sympathy for the dilapidated piece of humanity to which parental authority had forced her to ally herself, sat silent, and absorbed in a reverie of moody anticipations. The husband, not suspecting the cause of her silence — for his vanity was always a sad bar to his judgment when his own qualities, of whatever kind, whether mental or physical, were the object of it

—attributed her reluctance to assert her woman's privilege to timidity, or to that maidenly bashfulness natural, as he deemed, to a girl educated in the country, and therefore utterly unfamiliar with the usages of fashionable life. But his guess was immensely wide of the mark, for neither timidity nor bashfulness were features in Gertrude's character. As they travelled with extreme expedition, on the evening of the next day they arrived at the end of their journey, when the bride was ushered into the splendid mansion of which she was to be the future mistress, and which rivalled in magnificence the noblest establishments in the kingdom.

Time soon wore off the edge of disquietude, and by degrees Gertrude, now Mrs. Delorme, became reconciled to her condition. That she could be happy was impossible, but the pangs of mental suffering became at length so blunted, and her sensibility so deadened, that, though she had ceased to enjoy, she had also ceased to suffer. Her life was one dull, dead calm, neither convulsed by the desolating storm, nor refreshed by the gentle breeze. Her only hope of amelioration to the uniform insipidity of her condition lay in the prospect of an eventful release from the easy, indeed, but spiritless bondage to which she was for the present doomed. Her eye was never lighted by a smile, and that lovely glow which used to spread such a rich suffusion over her fair cheek had ceased to mantle there, while the sober melancholy, nay the almost severe gravity, of her aspect, was looked upon by her husband in the uxoriousness of dotage, as an indubitable manifestation of that conjugal discretion, which, to a man of his advanced years, was in a wife a thing "most devoutly to be wished."

Old Delorme had a nephew, of whom he professed to be extremely fond, the son of an only sister long since dead, from whom he inherited a good property, and looked forward to his uncle's decease for a considerable augmentation, which his venerable relative had always led him to expect. He was a remarkably handsome youth, of gentle manners and easy address. His habits were regular, and he was much respected by his friends. His uncle reposed the greatest confidence in his discretion and integrity, scarcely did any thing without consulting him, and relied upon his honour as implicitly as he did upon his own sagacity. The presence of this youth, though at first by no means a welcome circumstance to the deadened feelings of Mrs. Delorme, at length seemed to chequer the gloominess of her condition with a faint ray of satisfaction, and dissipated by degrees that morbid heaviness of thought and reflection to which, upon her arrival at her new abode, she had unreservedly given way. Her spirits, however, had been too violently shattered ever to resume their wonted elasticity. They were not, after a dislocation so terrible and complete, to be brought back again into their former channel of easy, unapprehensive gaiety; nevertheless young Theodore's presence afforded some relief to the dull uniformity of a scene, where, to her warped and saddened spirit, every thing was overspread with the sullen hue of misery; indeed her situation would have scarcely been endurable but for his presence; still she felt a void in her existence which she knew not how to fill up. She was occasionally visited by her parents and sisters, yet she was anything but happy. Her husband grew more and more peevish as his days increased and his infirmities multiplied, until he became perfectly intolerable. Will it be wondered at that she looked forward to her release from such a state of domestic thralldom with a restless and impatient anxiety?

Gertrude at length gave promise of becoming a mother; this, however, seemed to awaken no joy in the old man's bosom; all the springs of sensibility were dried up within him, and left it a barren wilderness, prolific only in the rank growth of cankered passion and swinish selfishness. His heart was callous to any refinements of feeling; not that the frost of apathy had so completely chilled it as to render him insensible to the blessings

of an heir; but he appeared to be the prey of dark suspicions, which though he did not indeed openly express them, were more than indicated in his manner and conduct. He was so morose and sullen, that his wife approached him as seldom as possible, which only augmented his constitutional peevishness and irritability. She was, however, happily soon released from the torments of his jealousy. He died suddenly one evening of apoplexy during a debauch, in which he was accustomed but too frequently to indulge, leaving her a widow after she had been just five years a wife. All her late husband's property was left to her, his nephew not being so much as named in the will.

Here, indeed, was a change in her destiny, but the worm had gnawed at the root of her happiness too long for it ever again to shoot forth with its former strength and luxuriance. It was a scathed trunk, alive, indeed, but blasted. She was left mistress of thirty thousand a year at the age of four and twenty, with an only child; still she was not happy. The fountain of joy was tainted at the source — the canker of grief had reached the very core of her heart. A blight seemed to have passed over her womanhood. The smile had faded from her cheek with its bloom, and she had ceased to find any relish either in society or in domestic enjoyments. She looked upon her child with an indifference, bordering upon apathy, which spoke not much for her maternal solicitude, nor the acuteness of her sensibility. This had been so seared, as to leave her almost callous to the more exquisite sympathies of her sex.

Theodore had quitted the house as soon as his uncle died, and the widow was left to that seclusion which was now no longer unwelcome to her, but which though preferred, under certain states of mind, to the bustle of intercourse, has nevertheless no charms to soothe a warped spirit, but only "ministers to a mind diseased" its own gloom and asperity. She soon became dissatisfied with the stately mansion in which she had been so long immured, surrounded as it was with all that wealth could purchase to render it delightful, but which to her never presented any thing save one continued scene of "splendid misery." She determined, therefore, to quit the country, where scenes of continued and bitter recollection had become odious to her, and take up her final residence abroad.

It appeared strange to every one, that so young and lovely a woman should shut herself out almost from human intercourse, and resolve to exile herself from her family and friends in the very prime of youth, and while her beauty, though faded rather from sorrow than the influence of years, was still predominant. But the secret springs which actuate human motives and determinations are frequently inscrutable, even to ourselves, and Mrs. Delorme, if it were in her power, appeared not disposed to resolve a question which was evident to no mind but her own. A mystery seemed to hang over the youthful widow, which no one was able to unravel, and in spite of the surmises that grew every day more and more rife in the neighbourhood, she ordered notices to be circulated announcing the immediate sale of the estate and family mansion of her late husband. In the course of a few weeks they fell into the hands of a new proprietor, and the young widow with her child left this country for the south of France, to seek in a foreign land that repose of spirit which had been so long denied her in her own. But, alas! she found it not. The wound had gone too deeply beyond the surface to be cicatrised — the desolation had been too complete to be removed under a brighter sun. There was evidently some secret cause of discontent, of melancholy, of wretchedness, which no one could penetrate, and upon which she was herself gravely and solemnly silent. The increasing austerity of her manner had something in it more awful than repulsive, and she excited the sympathy of all, though she sought the confidence of none.

Nismes was the place finally fixed upon by her for her future destination,

as it was more retired and less visited by her countrymen than other towns. Here the same asperity of character, by which she had lately been distinguished, continued, and in fact visibly increased with her years. She declined all communication with her relatives, to whom it was reported, and by them believed, that soon after she settled abroad her child had died, and she had devoted herself to a life of religious seclusion. She was never seen to smile. Her boy grew rapidly, and as he advanced in years, gave promise of a quickness of capacity that might finally lead to distinction. Though she appeared to treat him with sufficient indifference, she nevertheless paid particular attention to his education. He had all the advantages that the town and neighbourhood in which she resided could supply. He was a handsome youth, buoyant in spirits, and determined in character, which his mother did not discourage; in fact, whether from indolence or indifference was not evident, she sought not to divert the natural bias of his disposition, but left it to the direction of its own impulses, and thus the qualities of the mind and heart, both good and evil, grew unchecked by parental discipline into rapid and varied luxuriance; so that he acquired an ardour of temperament which frequently hurried him into rash adventures, though he as frequently gave proofs of the generous warmth of his feelings by the most sanguine displays of benevolence.

Henry Delorme finished his education by availing himself of the last benefit of a German university. He was now a young man of one-and-twenty vigorous in constitution, of acute understanding, and of a generous, though somewhat indomitable disposition. He absolutely adored his mother, who, in his partial judgment, was incomparable both in mind and person. She was now three and forty, still handsome, in spite of the secret sorrow to which she had appeared to be so long a prey. The mind's disease was not communicated to the frame; it was merely indicated in the latter by an habitual paleness and grave repose of the features, from which they were never seen to relax. She saw no company, and though she affected no sort of austerity, she could not conceal that she felt it, and there continued that unaccountable mystery in her whole deportment, which gave rise to the perpetual whispers of curiosity, and even provoked the surmises of superstition. Such as had been at first anxious to court her society, at length shunned it altogether, from an idle apprehension that the "dark lady," as she was called, for she always wore mourning, might have a nearer communion with "black spirits and white, blue spirits and grey," than was altogether seemly in a good Christian. Harry's home was, therefore, somewhat dull; but so ardent was his attachment to his mother, that he overlooked every personal inconvenience for the sake of administering to her comfort, and endeavoured to relieve the uniform dullness of his home by all those "appliances and means" which a tender solicitude suggests to an affectionate heart.

About this time an accident occurred, which, in its issue, led to the explanation of Mrs. Delorme's habitual reserve, and mysterious gravity of deportment. One day she was walking —

"As was her custom in an afternoon,"

in a retired part of the town, accompanied by her son, when, upon turning the corner of a street, she suddenly and unexpectedly met Theodore Mackenzie. At the sight of one whom she was so little prepared to meet, she started; her lips became ashy pale, and she nearly fainted in her son's arms, who bore her to a neighbouring shop, where, after a while, she recovered, when he accompanied her home. Though she soon resumed her wonted serenity, it was evident that she had been deeply agitated. Henry, knowing her inflexible reserve, and her nervous irritability, when any

attempt was made to dissipate it, forbore to question her, though he was painfully anxious to ascertain why the sight of an apparent stranger should have produced such a powerful effect upon her usually imperturbable temperament. He was extremely uneasy, and the more his mind dwelt upon the circumstance, the more anxious did he feel to resolve the question. It was something higher than mere curiosity that actuated his feelings. Affection for his parent was the mainspring of every action which had any reference to her, and knowing that to ask an explanation from her would render her uneasy, and probably excite her anger, he determined at once to seek the party who had been the cause of her disquietude, and demand the explanation from him. With this view, without the least intimation of his intention, either by word or gesture, he repaired to the principal hotel of the town, where he ascertained that a Colonel Mackenzie had arrived the preceding day; and upon being ushered into that gentleman's apartment, he immediately recognised in him the person, at the sight of whom his mother had become so strangely agitated. Upon seeing Harry, there appeared to be a supercilious expression on the Colonel's countenance, while his manner was neither courteous nor conciliatory. It has been already said that young Delorme was naturally impetuous, and that his mother was at once the pride of his heart, and the centre of his affections. The most transient thought that conveyed the least imaginable imputation upon her, would have been to him, at any time, an excitement and an agony, but doubly so at this moment, when he felt that some disagreeable mystery hung over the parent on whom he so fondly doted, which she was evidently anxious to conceal.

Upon observing the cold and scornful smile which curled Mackenzie's lip, as he haughtily motioned to his visiter to be seated, Harry Delorme paused, and fixed his dark eye steadfastly on his, while every drop of blood rushed from his face, and left it pale as marble. Mackenzie quailed not at the glance, but returned it with a look of still more withering scorn. Young Delorme could no longer control the passion which he had hitherto but imperfectly smothered, and demanded, in no very measured terms, an explanation of what had just occurred to the lady with whom he had been in company.

"What right have you to ask that question?"

"I am her privileged protector," was the reply.

"Her privileged protector!" This was no sooner uttered than Harry, roused by the tone of bitter sarcasm in which it was delivered, paused not a moment, but struck the offender violently in the face. The interview terminated in an agreement to meet on the instant at a convenient place in the neighbourhood, and settle their dispute at the point of the sword. There was little time for preparation, and as both were greatly excited, no explanation was either demanded or given, and both repaired to the appointed spot, actuated by the most hostile determination. Delorme spoke not a word to the friend who accompanied him, yet the heedless celerity of his progress, the dark flush upon his cheek, and the wild glare of his eye, but too plainly indicated his untractable sternness of purpose. His mind was absorbed in the contemplation of what might be the terrible issue of the encounter. Harry Delorme was an expert swordsman; and, as he had been the person challenged, he had a right to a choice of weapons; but when the parties reached the ground, upon Colonel Mackenzie representing his utter want of skill in the management of the sword, his adversary agreed to decide the matter with a pair of pistols with which the challenger was provided. He knew himself to be a tolerably expert shot; and, therefore, considered that he could not stand much at a disadvantage with his opponent.

The ground was now paced by one of the seconds, while the principals seemed to eye each other with that mute, calm scrutiny, too silent for words, and too terrible for description. Nine paces were at length measured,

when the parties took their respective stations. At the word fire, both discharged their pistols, when Colonel Mackenzie fell instantly dead. He did not utter a groan; the ball had entered the right temple, and passed quite through the brain. The moment Harry saw the fatal issue of his rashness, he was overcome with sudden remorse. In an instant all his resentment subsided, his heart melted, tears streamed over his cheeks, and he would have sacrificed any thing, but his parent's honour and his own, to have restored the unhappy man who had so wantonly provoked him to this deed of blood. He felt that the rashness of a moment would render him miserable for life, and, moreover, that this rashness had prevented the explanation which he so anxiously sought, and was now only to be obtained from her who alone could make it, but from whom he felt the most invincible reluctance to seek it. He went home in a state of mind to be conceived only, not described. By this time the evening had set in, and his mother had been somewhat uneasy at his absence. She perceived upon his entrance that he was agitated, but with her usual indifference merely remarked that she had expected him home earlier, then left him to his reflections and his remorse.

The fatal event was, of course, soon known, and it shortly reached the ears of Mrs. Delorme that her son had killed an officer in a duel. She instantly entered his chamber, where he was seated upon the bed, bathed in tears. There was a slight quiver on her lip, and a hurried movement in her gait as she entered, which struck her son as a thing so unusual with her, that he started from the bed, hurried to her side, and eagerly demanded the cause of her visit.

"Harry," she replied, with that sort of deep deathly calmness which precedes the earthquake, "I hear you have been the principal in a fatal duel."

"Alas, mother, it is but too true!"

"What is the name of the unfortunate man?"

"Colonel Theodore Mackenzie."

At the mention of the well-remembered name, the countenance of Mrs. Delorme became ghastly—every drop of blood receded from her lips—her eyes fixed upon her son's with an expression of speechless horror, when, after the pause of a few moments, in which the whole mass of his blood seemed frozen in his veins, she exclaimed, in a voice of terrific solemnity—
"THEN YOU HAVE MURDERED YOUR FATHER."

THE SAILOR'S WEDDING.

BY MISS MITFORD.

[From "*The English Annual*," for 1835.]

BESIDES Mrs. Martin and her maid Patty, and her cat, there was one inmate of the little toy-shop in the market-place, that immediately attracted Mr. Singleton's attention, and not only won, but secured, the warm and constant affection of the kind-hearted bachelor. It was a chubby, noisy, sturdy, rude, riotous elf, of some three years old, still petticoated, but so self-willed, and bold, and masterful, so strong and so conscious of his strength, so obstinate and resolute, and, above all, so utterly contemptuous of female objurgation, and rebellious to female rule, (an evil propensity that seems born with the unfair sex,) that it was by no means necessary to

hear his Christian name of Tom, to feel assured that the urchin in question belonged to the masculine half of the species. Nevertheless, daring, wilful, and unruly as it was, the brat was loveable, being, to say the truth, one of the merriest, drollest, best natured, most generous, and most affectionate creatures that ever bounded about this work-a-day world; and Mr. Singleton, who, in common with many plodding, heavy, dull persons, liked nothing so well as the reckless lightheartedness which supplied the needful impetus to his own lumpish spirit, took to the boy the very first evening, and became, from that hour, his most indulgent patron and protector, his champion in every scrape, and refuge in every calamity.

There was no love lost between them. Tom, who would have resisted Mrs. Martin or Patty to the death, who, the more they called him the more he would not come, and the more they bade him not do a thing, the more he did it; who, when cautioned against wetting his feet, jumped up to his neck* in the water-tub, and when desired to keep himself clean, solaced himself and the tabby cat with a game at romps in the coal-hole; who, in short, when under female dominion, played every prank of which an unruly boy is capable, was amenable to the slightest word or look from Mr. Singleton, came at his call, went away at his desire, desisted at his command from riding the unfortunate wooden steed, who, to say nothing of two or three dangerous falls, equally perilous to the horse and his rider, ran great risk of being worn out by Master Tom's passion for equestrian exercise; and even caused him to desist from his favourite exercise of parading before the door beating a toy-drum, or blowing a penny trumpet, and producing from those noisy instruments a din more insupportable than ever such instruments have been found capable of making, before or since.

Mr. Singleton did more; not content with the negative benefit of restraining Master Tom's inclination for idleness, he undertook and accomplished the positive achievement of commencing his education. Under his auspices, at the cost of many cakes and much gingerbread, and with the great bribe of being able to read for himself the stories of fairies and giants of Tom Thumb, and Blue Beard, and Cinderella, and Sinbad the Sailor, which he was now fain to coax his aunt and her maid Patty into telling him, did Tom conquer the mysteries of the alphabet and spelling book, in spite of the predictions of the dame of a neighbouring day-school, who had had the poor boy at her academy, as she was pleased to call it, for half a year, during which time, she and her birch, put together, had never been able to teach him the difference between A and B, and who now, in that common spirit of prophecy in which "the wish is father to the thought," boldly foretold that "all the Mr. Singletons in England would never make a scholar of Tom Syndham; she, for her part, had no notion of a child, who not only stole her spectacles, but did not mind being whipt for it when he had done. She wished no ill to the boy, but he would come to no good. All the world would see that."

Strange as it may seem, this effusion of petty malice had its effect in stimulating the efforts of our good curate. The spirit of contradiction, that very active principle of our common nature, had its existence even in him;

* I remember an imp, the son of a dear friend of mine, of some four or five years old, of very delicate frame, but of a most sturdy and masterful spirit, who, one day standing on the lawn without a hat, in the midst of a hard rain, said to his mother, who, after nurses and nursery maids had striven in vain with the screaming, kicking, struggling urchin, tried her gentler influence to prevail on him to come in doors for fear of catching cold; "I won't go in! I will stand here! I choose to catch cold! I like to be ill. and if you plague me much longer, I'll die!" This hopeful young gentleman has outlived the perils of his childhood, (I suppose his self-will was drubbed out of him by stronger and equally determined comrades at a public school,) and he is now an aspirant of some eminence in the literary and political world. I have not seen him these twenty years: but if this note should meet his eye, he would be amused by my tender recollection of his early days.

but, as bees can extract wax and honey from poisonous plants, so in his kind and benevolent temper it showed itself only in an extraordinary activity in well-doing. "Tom Syndham shall be a scholar," thought and said Mr. Singleton; and as his definition of the word was something different from that of the peevish old sybil, whose notion of scholarship reached no farther than the power of reading or rather chanting, without let or pause, a chapter of crabbed names in the Old Testament, with such a comprehension of the sense as it pleased Heaven, and such a pronunciation as would have made an Hebraist stare, he not only applied himself earnestly to the task of laying the foundation of a classical education, by teaching the boy writing, ciphering, and the rudiments of the Latin grammar, but exerted all his influence to get him admitted, at as early an age as the rules would permit, to the endowed grammar school of the town.

The master of the school, a man who united great learning to a singular generosity of character and sweetness of temper, received with more than common kindness the fine open-countenanced boy, whom Mr. Singleton recommended so strongly to his notice and protection. But after he had been with him about the same time that he had passed with the dame of the day-school, he, in answer to his patron's anxious inquiries, made a prophecy nearly resembling hers, — to wit, that Tom Syndham, spirited, intelligent and clever as he undoubtedly was, seemed to him the most unlikely boy of his form to become an eminent scholar.

And as time wore away, this persuasion only became the more rooted in the good Doctor's mind. "He may, to be sure, take to Greek, as you say, Mr. Singleton, and go off to Oxford on the archbishop's foundation; things that seem as impossible do sometimes happen; nevertheless to judge from probabilities, and from the result of a pretty long experience, I should say that to expect from Tom Syndham any thing beyond the learning that will bear him creditably through the school and the world, is to demand a change of temper and of habit, not far from miraculous. I don't say what the charms of the Greek *Delectus* may effect, but, in my mind, the boy who is foremost in every sport, and first in every exercise; who swims, and rows, and dances, and fences better than any lad of his inches in the county, and who, in defence of a weaker child, or to right some manifest wrong, will box, eye, and beat into the bargain, a youth half as big again as himself, and who, moreover, is the liveliest, merriest, pleasantest little fellow that ever came under my observation, is far fitter for the camp than the college. Send him into the world, that's the place for him. Put him into the army, and I'll answer for his success. For my own part, I should not wonder to find him enlisting some day; neither should I care; for if he went out a drummer, he'd come back a general; nothing can keep down Tom Syndham;" and with his prognostic, at once pleasant and puzzling, (for poor Mr. Singleton had not an acquaintance in the army, except the successive recruiting officers who had at various times carried off the heroes of B.,) the worthy Doctor marched away.

Fortune, however, who seems to find amusement in sometimes disappointing the predictions of the wise, and sometimes bringing them to bear in the most unexpected manner, and by totally opposite means, had a different destiny for our friend Tom.

It so happened that one of the principal streets of the good town of B., a street the high road through which leading westward, bore the name of Bristol Street, boasted a bright red mansion, retired from the line of houses, with all the dignity of a dusty shrubbery, a sweep not very easy to turn, a glaring bit of blank wall, and a porte cochère. Now the wall being itself somewhat farther back than the other houses in the street, and the space between that and the ordinary pavement being regularly flagged, an old sailor without his legs had taken possession of the interval, for the sake of

writing, with white and coloured chalks, sundry loyal sentences, such as "God save the king," "Rule Britannia," and so forth, by way of excitement to the passers-by, to purchase one from a string of equally loyal sea ballads, that hung over head intermixed with two-penny portraits of eminent naval commanders, all very much alike, and all wearing very blue coats and very red faces.

At first, the two respectable ladies (dowager spinsters, Morris by name) objected greatly to the use made of their wall and their pavement by the crippled veteran in question, who was commonly known throughout B—— by the name of "Poor Jack;" probably from his attachment to the well-known sailor's ditty, which happened to form his first introduction to the younger of the two ladies in question.

"Here am I, poor Jack,
Just come home from sea;
With shiners in my sack,—
Pray what d'ye think of me?"

"I think you a very saucy person," replied Miss Arabella Morris to this question, not said but sung by the sailor in a most Stentorian voice, as he lay topping and tailing the great I in "God save Great George our King," just on one side of their gate. "I think you are a very saucy person," quoth Miss Arabella, "to sit begging here, just at our door."

"Begging," rejoined poor Jack, "I'm no beggar, I hope. I've lost my precious limbs, when I fought under Admirable Rodney; I've a pension, bless his majesty, and have no call to disparage the service by begging like a land lubber."

"Sailors to forget their duty,
Must not come for to go —"

chanted Jack.

"I must really apply to the mayor," said Miss Arabella.

"Go," said Jack, continuing his work, and resuming his stave.

"When the captain he heard of it,
He very much applauded what she had done,
And he made her the first lieutenant
Of the gallant Thunder bomb."

"Made me a first lieutenant!" exclaimed the affronted Arabella. "Was ever anything so impertinent! Pray, if you are not a beggar, what may you be?"

"My name d'ye see's Tom Tough,
Oh, I've seen a little service,
Where the foaming billows roar and the winds do blow;
I've sailed with noble Howe,
And I've sailed with gallant Jervis.
And only lost an eye, and got a timber toe;
And more if you'd be knowing,
I've sailed with old Boscawen."

again snouted (for singing is hardly the word to express his sort of music) the incorrigible Jack.

"Well, I must go to the Mayor," said Miss Arabella; and Jack again uplifted his voice:—

"Then in Providence I trust,
For you know what must be, must:"

and, consoled by this philosophical strain, tranquilly continued his occupation, which, after a little persuasion from the mayor, and something like an apology from Jack himself (to whose looks and ways they began to get accustomed,) the good ladies permitted him to pursue in peace and quietness, under their sheltering wall.

The above conversation will have shown that poor Jack was something of a humourist, but his invincible good humour was his prime qualification. I doubt if there was in all England a more contented person than the poor cripple, who picked up a precarious livelihood by selling loyal ballads in Bristol Street, in B——. Maimed as he was, there was something in his round bullet head, and rough sun-burnt countenance; in his nod, his wink, his grin, (for it would not do to call such a contortion a smile,) in the snap of his fingers, and the roll of his short athletic body, more expressive of fun and merriment than I ever beheld in any human being. Call him poor Jack, indeed! Why, if happiness be wealth, he was the happiest Jack in Christendom.

So thought Tom Syndham; whose road to and from school passed the lair of the sailor, and who, having stood one evening to hear him go through the whole ballad,

“On board of the *Arethusa*,”

and finally joined in the *refrain* with much of Jack's own spirit, fell into conversation with him on the battles he had fought, the ships he had served in, and the heroes he had served under (and it was remarkable that he talked of the ships with the same sort of personal affection which he displayed towards their captains,) and from that evening made up his mind that he would be a sailor too.

Sooth to say, the enthusiasm with which Jack spoke of Keppel and Rodney, and Parker, and Howe, as well as of the commanders of his youth, Hawke and “old Boscawen;” his graphic description of the sea-fights in which the English flag did really seem to be the ensign of victory; the rough, bold, manly tone of the ballads which he sung, and the personal character of the narrator, were in themselves enough to work such an effect on a lively, spirited, ambitious boy, whose bravery of mind and hardihood of body made him account toil and danger rather as elements of enjoyment, like the bright frosty air of winter, than as evils to shrink from; whilst his love of distinction made him covet glory for its own sake, and his grateful and affectionate temper rendered the prospect of wealth (for of course he was to be a second Rodney) delightful, as the means of repaying his aunt and Mr. Singleton the benefits which he had derived from their kindness.

Besides this, he had always felt an innate passion for the water. His earliest pranks of dabbling in kennels, and plunging in pools, had shown his duck-like propensities; and half his scrapes at school had occurred in a similar way: — bathing before the appointed day, swimming in dangerous places, rowing and fishing at forbidden hours; he had been caught half a dozen times boat-building at the wharf, and had even been detected in substituting Robinson Crusoe for the Greek Delectus, — from which Mr. Singleton expected such miracles. In short, Tom Syndham was one of those boys whose genius may fairly be called semi-aquatic.

That he would be a sailor was Tom's firm resolution. His only doubt was whether to accomplish the object in the regular manner, by apprising Mrs. Martin and Mr. Singleton of his wishes, or to embrace the speedier and less troublesome method of running away. The latter mode offered the great temptation of avoiding remonstrances equally tedious (and the grateful boy would hardly allow himself to think how tedious!) and unavailing, and of escaping from the persuasions of which his affectionate heart

felt in anticipation the power to grieve, though not to restrain; besides it was the approved fashion of your young adventurer; Robinson Crusoe had run away; and he consulted Jack seriously on the measure, producing, in answer to certain financial questions which the experience of the tar suggested, a new half-crown, two shillings, a crooked sixpence, and sundry half-pence, as his funds for the expedition.

"Five and threepence halfpenny," exclaimed the prudent mariner, counting the money, and shaking his head, "'T won't do, master! Consider there's the voyage to Portsmouth, on board o' the what d'ye call 'um, the coach there; and then you'll want new rigging, and have to lie at anchor a shortish bit may be, before you get afloat. I'll tell you what, messmate, leave's light; ax his honour the chaplain, the curate, or whatever you call him, and if so be he turns cantankerous, you can but cut and run after all."

And Tom agreed to take his advice; and after settling in his own mind, as he walked home, various ingenious plans for breaking the matter gradually and tenderly to his good old aunt, (on whom he relied for the still more arduous task of communicating this tremendous act of contumacy to his reverend patron,) he, from sheer nervousness and over-excitement, bolted into the house, and forgetting all his intended preparations and softenings, — a thing which has often happened from the same causes, to older and wiser persons, — shouted out at once to Mrs. Martin, who happened to be in the shop talking to Mr. Singleton, "Aunt, I'm determined to go to sea directly, and if you dont let me, I'll run away."

Never were two people more astonished. And as the hitherto respectful and dutiful boy, who, with all his spirit, had never before counteracted a wish expressed by either, continued to answer to all remonstrances, "I will go to sea, and if you won't let me, I'll run away," Mr. Singleton began to think it best to inquire into his own views, motives, and prospects.

Vague enough they were, to be sure! Robinson Crusoe, and a crippled sailor, and half a dozen ballads for inducements, and a letter of introduction from poor Jack to a certain veteran of his own standing, Bob Griffin by name, formerly a boatswain, and now keeping a public house at Portsea, and commanding, according to him of the stumps, a chain of interest, somewhat resembling Tom Bowling's famous ladder of promotion in Roderick Random, a scrawl directed in red chalk in printed letters half an inch long, to MISTUR BOB GRIFIN LANLURD SHIP AGRUND PORSEE, by way of introduction to the naval service of Great Britain! However, there was in the earnestness of the lad, in the very slightness of the means on which he built, and in his bold, ardent, and manly character, that evidence of the bent of his genius, the strong and decided turn for one pursuit, and one only, which it is scarcely wise to resist.

Mr. Singleton, remembering, perhaps, the prediction of the good Doctor, yielded. He happened to have a first cousin, a captain in the navy; and on visiting our friend Jack, whom he found repairing the chalking of "Rule Britannia," and chaunting two lines of his favourite stave,

"But the worst of it was, when the little ones were sickly,
Whether they would live or die, the Doctor could not tell,"

he had the satisfaction to find that he had sailed with his relation when second lieutenant of a sloop called the *Gazelle*; and although relinquishing, with many thanks, the letter of introduction to "Mistur Bob Griffin," actually accepted one from the same hard honest fist, to Captain Conyers; and it is to be doubted whether poor Jack's recommendation of "the tight youngster," as the veteran called him, had not as much to do with the captain's cordial reception of his new midshipman, as the more elaborate praises of Mr. Singleton.

A midshipman, however, he was. The war was at its height, and he had the luck (excellent luck as he thought it) to be in the very hottest of its fury. In almost every fight of the great days of our naval glory, the days of Nelson and his immediate successors, was Tom Syndham, first of the first, bravest of the brave, readiest of the ready. From the moment that his age and rank allowed him to be officially noticed in the despatches, he was so, and it is to be questioned whether the very happiest moment of Mr. Singleton's life was not that in which he first read Tom's name in the Gazette. He cried like a child; and then he read it to Mrs. Martin, and, whilst trying to lecture her for crying, cried again himself. He took the paper round the town to every house of decent gentility, from the mayor's downwards; read it to the parish clerk, and the sexton; and finally relinquished an evening party to which he was engaged at the Miss Morris's, to carry the news and the newspaper to poor Jack, who, grown too infirm to face the weather, had been comfortably placed, through his kindness, in an almshouse about two miles off. It is even reported that, on this occasion, Mr. Singleton, although by no means noted for his skill in music, was so elated as to join poor Jack in the chorus of

"On board of the *Arethusa*,"

in honour of Tom Syndham.

From this time all prospered with our gallant sailor, except, indeed, a few glorious scars which he would have been ashamed to want, and one of which, just after he had been appointed first lieutenant to the *Diana*, gave him the opportunity of coming back to B——, for a short time, to regain his health, and revisit his old friends. Think of the delight of Mr. Singleton, of Mrs. Martin, of her maid Patty, and of poor Jack!

"Here am I, poor Jack!"

shouted the veteran, when Tom made his appearance;

"Here am I, poor Jack,
Just come home from sea;
With shiners in my sack,—
Pray what d'ye think of me?"

And the above, as it happened, was highly appropriate; for between battles and prizes, Mr. Syndham, although still so young a man, was rich enough to allow him to display his frank and noble generosity of spirit, in the most delicate way to Mr. Singleton and his aunt, and the most liberal to Jack and Patty. None who had been kind to him were forgotten; and his delightful spirit and gaiety, his animated good humour, his acuteness and intelligence, rendered him the very life of the place.

He was a singularly fine young man too. Not tall, but strong, muscular, and well built, with a noble chest, and that peculiar carriage of the head, which gives so much of dignity to the air and figure. The head itself was full of manliness and expression. The short curling black hair, already given token of early baldness, and exposing a high, broad, polished forehead, whose fairness contrasted with the sunburnt complexion of the rest of the face; an eagle eye, a mouth combining firmness and sweetness, regular features, and a countenance at once open, spirited, and amiable, harmonised well with a character and reputation, of which his fellow-townsmen already felt proud. Tom Syndham was the lion of B——; happy was the damsel whom he honoured with his hand at the monthly assembly; and, when he rejoined his ship, he was said to have carried away, unintentionally, more hearts than had been won with care, and pain,

and malice prepense, by any half dozen flirting recruiting officers in the last half dozen years.

No B—— beauty was, however, destined to captivate the brave sailor. Love and fortune had prepared for him a very different destiny.

Returning home towards the end of the war, (I mean the great war, the war *par excellence*, the war with Napoleon,) into Portsmouth Harbour, or rather bringing in a prize, a frigate of many more guns and much greater force than his own, the gallant Captain Syndham, (for he had now been for some years posted,) no sooner set foot on shore than he encountered an old messmate. "Ha, Syndham! your old luck, I see, you and the little *Laodamia* have peppered the Frenchmen, as usual," said the brave Captain Manning. "Do you make any stay at Portsmouth?"

"Yes," replied Captain Syndham; "I have sent my first Lieutenant to London with despatches, and shall be fixed here for some days."

"I am thoroughly glad to hear it," rejoined his friend; "for myself, I am rather awkwardly situated. An old aunt of mine has just brought two of my cousins to see the lions, depending on me for their escort. Now I must be off to the Admiralty in an hour; dare not stay another hour for all the aunts and cousins in Christendom. They, poor souls, don't know a creature in the place; and I shall be eternally obliged to you if you will take my turn of duty, and walk them over the dockyards, and so forth. By the way they are nice girls—not sisters, but cousins. One is an heiress, above 3000*l.* a-year, and a sweet place by the side of the Wye; the other is called a beauty. I don't think her so; or rather I prefer the heiress. But nice girls they are both; I have the honour to be their guardian, and if either should hit your fancy, you have my free leave to win her and wear her. So now come with me and I will introduce you."

And in five minutes more they were in one of the best rooms in the Fountain, and Captain Syndham was introduced to Mrs. Lacy, and to Miss Manning, and Miss Sophia Manning.

Mrs. Lacy was a lady-like elderly woman, a widow without a family, and very fond of her nieces, who had been brought up under her own eye, and seemed to supply to her the place of daughters. "This is the heiress!" thought Captain Syndham, as he glanced over a tall commanding figure, expensively and fashionably dressed, and with that decided air of consequence and self-importance which the habit of power is too apt to give to a person in that unfortunate predicament. "This is the heiress! and this, I suppose, must be the beauty," thought Captain Syndham, turning to a shorter, slenderer, fairer young woman, very simply dressed, but all blushes and smiles, and youthful animation. "This must be the beauty," thought the captain, "and whatever Manning may say, beautiful she is—never saw a sweeter creature than Miss Sophy."

And if he thought Sophy Manning pretty then, the impression was far deepened when he had passed two or three days in her company—had shown her the wonders of that floating world, a man-of-war—had shown her the dock-yards, with their miracles of machinery; and had even persuaded Mrs. Lacy, a timorous woman, the least in the world afraid of being drowned, and Miss Manning, a thorough fine lady, exceedingly troubled for her satin pelisse, first of all to take a dinner on board the dear *Laodamia*, and then to suffer themselves to be rowed round St. Helen's in the captain's own boat, gallantly manned by the officers of the ship.

Small enjoyment had Mrs. Lacy in fear of her life, or the stately Honoria, in care for her finery; but Sophy, in a white gown and a straw bonnet, thinking nothing of herself or her dress, but wholly absorbed by a keen and vivid interest in the detail of a sailor's life—in admiration of the order and cleanliness that every where met her eye, (always the first point of astonishment to a landswoman,) and in a still more intense feeling of plea-

sure and wonder at the careless good humour of those lords of the ocean, — bold as lions to their enemies, playful as kittens to their friends, — nothing could equal her enthusiasm for the navy: the sailors, who, like dogs and children, and women, and all other creatures who have not spoilt their fine natural instinct by an over-cultivation of the reasoning powers, are never mistaken in the truth of a feeling, and never taken in by its assumption, perceived it at once, and repaid it by the most unfeigned zealous devotion. They took all the care of Mrs. Lacy and Miss Manning, as women, and ladies, and friends of their captain; but Miss Sophy was the woman for them. They actually preferred her pretty face to the figure head of the *Laodamia*.

And Captain Syndham, himself an enthusiast for his profession, what thought he of this enthusiasm for the sea, and the navy, and that frigate of frigates, the *Laodamia*? Did he like it the less because he might honestly suspect that some little reference to himself had strengthened and quickened this deep interest? because she had drawn from him his own early history, and talked of the toy-shop in the market-place of B —, and of poor Jack, and the maid Patty, and even of Mr. Singleton himself, (little as one would think that good gentleman, now abroad with his third wife, was calculated to strike a young lady,) with almost as much affection as of his frigate and his prize, and his ship's crew, and the absent first lieutenant, his especial friend, and a little midshipman, his especial protégé? To any man of sensibility, this sensibility shown by a woman, young, lovely, animated, and artless, would have been dangerous; to a sailor just come ashore it was irresistible. He made her talk in return of her own friends, and pleasures and amusements, of her home at Sanbury, where she had lived all her life with her aunt and her cousin, and where she hoped always to live; ("not always," thought our friend the captain;) and how much more lovable those dear relations were in that dear home. "My aunt," said Sophy, "is nervous, and afraid, so that you know nothing of her but that infirmity, and dear Honor does not love travelling, and does not like the sea, and has been all her life so much admired, that she is a little spoilt, and does not always know what she would have; but you will love Honor when you see her at home."

"I may like her," said the captain, "but I shall never love any woman but one;" and then followed in full form the declaration and the acceptance. "I am so glad that you are not the heiress," added Captain Syndham, after repeating to her her cousin's jesting permission to him to marry which of his wards he liked best; "I am so glad that you are not the heiress."

"Are you?" said Sophy, quietly. "Now I should have thought that you, thorough sportsman as you are for a sailor," added Sophy, slyly, "would have liked Sanbury Manor, with its right of shooting, coursing, and fishing, and its glorious Wye river. You would like Sanbury Manor."

"Hang Sanbury Manor!" exclaimed the captain.

"Nay," said Sophy, "it's a pretty place, and a pretty house; one of those old fashioned houses that fall upon the eye like a picture. The very lodge at Sanbury is beautiful. You must not take an aversion to Sanbury."

"I should like any place that had been your home, pretty or ugly," replied Captain Syndham; "or rather I should think any house pretty that you lived in. But nevertheless, I am heartily glad that you are not the heiress of Sanbury, because I have been so fortunate with prizes, and you seem so simple in your tastes, that I have enough for both of us, and now no one can even suspect me of being mercenary; of thinking of anything or any body but your own dear self."

"I should not have suspected you," said Sophy, tenderly; "but you must go to Sanbury, and look at the old place, my home for so many years; you promise me that?"

"Yea," replied the captain; "but it must be with Sophy Syndham, and not with Sophy Manning;" and in spite of Sophy's blushing, "must indeed!" So it was settled, they were all to go to London, to which the affairs of his ship and his prize now called the captain; there they were to be married, and on their return from a bridal excursion to Bath and Clifton, and Wales, were to pay a short visit to Mrs. Lacy and Honor, at the old manor house, which had for so many years been the fair bride's only home.

Mrs. Lacy, on being apprized of the intended marriage, began talking about money and settlements, and those affairs which, to persons not in love, seem so important; but Captain Syndham stopped her, and Sophy stopped her; and as, in a letter to Captain Manning, the generous sailor desired that writings might be prepared, by which all that he was worth in the world should be settled on Sophy and her children; and as these settlements, read over by the lawyer in the usual unintelligible manner, were signed by the enamoured seaman without the slightest examination, it was impossible for any guardian to object to conduct so confiding and so liberal.

"Oh, that poor Jack could see this day!" was Capt. Syndham's exclamation as they were leaving London after the happy ceremony, in his own elegant new carriage, attended, somewhat to his surprise, by the lady's maid, whom he had thought exclusively devoted to the service of Miss Manning. Oh, that poor Jack could see this day! you must make acquaintance with him, Sophy, and with my good aunt, and Mr. Singleton. You must know them, Sophy; they will so adore you.

"And I shall so love the people whom you love," rejoined Sophy; but we have no room for bridal talk, and must hasten to the conclusion of an over-long tale.

After a few days of rapid travelling—short days they seemed to the married lovers—after a very brief tour, for the bridegroom's time was limited, they arrived at the beautiful village of Sanbury.

"There it is—the dear manor-house!" exclaimed Sophy, as they approached a fine old building, embosomed in its own venerable oaks, the silver Wye winding like a shining snake amid the woody hills and verdant lawns; "there it is!" exclaimed the fair bride, "mine own dear home! And your home too, mine own dear husband! for being mine, it is yours," continued she, with a smile that would have made a man overlook a greater misfortune than that of having married an heiress. "You are really the master of Sanbury, think of it what you may," pursued the fair bride; "it is my first deceit, and shall be my last: but when I found that because Honoria was the elder you took her for the richer cousin, I could not resist the temptation of this little surprise; and if you are angry, there (pointing to the side of the wood) sits one who will plead for me."

And suddenly, from the beautiful gothic lodge, the gate belonging to which had been so arranged as to open with a pulley, arose the well known sounds,

"Here am I, poor Jack,
Just come home from sea;
With shiners in my sack—
Pray what do you think of me?"

And there sat poor Jack himself in all his glory, waving his hat over his grey head, with the tears streaming down his honest cheeks, absolutely tipsy with joy.

And before Captain Syndham had sufficiently recovered from his astonishment to speak a word, indeed, whilst he was clasping his lovely wife to his own warm heart,—the carriage had reached the mansion, on the steps of which stood, in one happy group, her people and his; Captain Manning, Mrs. Lacy, and Honor, (then really beautiful in her smiling sympathy.)

Mr. Singleton, Mrs. Martin, and the little maid Patty, standing behind on the upper step, and looking two inches taller in her joy and delight.

So much for the Sailor's wedding. There is little need to say, that the married life, which sprang from such a beginning, was as happy as it was prosperous.

THE CONDEMNED.

BY THE REV. HOBART CAUNTER.

[From "The English Annual," for 1835.]

THE assizes approached. Clifford's friends were numerous and influential, but in his case influence could be of no avail as a safeguard against the penalty of crime. He knew that if he were found guilty he must suffer. His sole chance, therefore, was to silence that only evidence which could convict him. Against the oath of Esther Lutterel nothing could prevail. Immense sums were consequently offered to purchase her silence, but she despised such sordid temptation. Every effort made to win her from her resolved and just purpose was unavailing. She turned with scornful indignation from the offered bribe. "No," said she, "he has ruined me; that I could forgive, because Heaven might pardon that; but he has murdered my child — that Heaven will never pardon, and I dare not. I will not, therefore, interpose betwixt the delinquent and his judge, when that delinquent deserves to die, and that judge is the delegate of One who is eternal. He has braved the penalty; why then should he not suffer it? Let him die."

The day of trial arrived. Clifford was brought into the dock — alas! how changed! Terror had wrought fearful ravages upon a countenance, which the most fastidious could not deny to be handsome. The blood seemed to have receded from every vein, while the blanched features told a fearful tale of sleepless nights and daily heart-burnings. A yellow tinge had usurped the usually transparent skin, while the whole countenance, gathered into one unvarying expression of subdued agony, appeared like an ivory head that had yielded up its primitive whiteness to the gradual spoliation of time. The change which a few short weeks had wrought was truly astonishing. He was scarcely to be recognised as the once robust, lively, thoughtless Clifford. Days seemed to have been converted into years. His hair had become thin, and hung in straggling tresses on his pallid temples, which were deeply indented with the lines of acute suffering. His nose was sharp and shrunk; his eyes were sunk and hollow; his cheeks rigid; his jaws fallen; and his lips so attenuated, that, when closed, the mouth was only indicated by a strong curved line. He sighed deeply, and the hurried glance which he every now and then threw around the court, showed how busy were the enemies of his peace within him. A tear of sympathy gathered in the eyes of many of the spectators, when they beheld the altered aspect of the man whose person but a few weeks before had been the envy of many and the admiration of all. What a tyrant is guilt when her slaves crouch beneath her scourge!

The trial commenced. Clifford was near fainting several times during the opening address of the opposing counsel, and when he heard the dreadful charge announced that he was the murderer of his own child, he fell

senseless upon the beam which separated him from that part of the court appropriated to the spectators. He was, however, soon restored to a consciousness of his awful situation, and was furnished with a glass of water at his own request, which he swallowed with the most painful eagerness. Several times during the opening speech he was near falling. He continued, however, to retain his senses to the conclusion, when the prosecutor was ushered into court. Every eye was fixed upon the witness-box. After a short pause, Esther entered with a firm step, and a serene, unembarrassed air; nevertheless, as soon as she was ready to be examined, the momentary quiver of her lip, and the transient flush upon her ashy cheek, showed that all was not at rest within. Her bosom heaved quick and heavily, but her self-command, evidently amid the most violent inward struggles, was truly surprising. She lost not her composure a single instant. Her clear, dark eye had in it an expression of lofty determination, blended, nevertheless, with a dignified respect, which excited the admiration of the whole court. Every person present felt a lively interest in her welfare: but in proportion as their sympathies were excited towards her they were weakened towards her seducer. The contrast between them was remarkable. She stood before them in the severe dignity of her beauty—he in the untimely wreck of his. In her the hand of sorrow had shaded, but not eclipsed it: in him, the scourge of terror and the stings of remorse had marred it altogether. Although she had become the dupe of his artifice, and suffered the penalty of her frailty, he, nevertheless, had been the greater victim; for while she had been the prey of another's guilt, he had fallen a victim to his own. It must be confessed, she rejoiced that retribution had overtaken him. Her wrongs were too great to be easily forgiven; they had seared her sympathies—they had extinguished her woman's tenderness.

Upon entering the box, Esther made a slight inclination of the head to the presiding judge, and then fixed her eye placidly, but keenly, upon the examining advocate. She exhibited no symptoms of timidity, but stood before him with an air of such settled collectedness, that he seemed rather disconcerted, as he cast towards her a glance of somewhat equivocal inquiry, and found it repelled by a quiet but indignant frown. She, like the prisoner, was dressed in the deepest mourning, which strikingly contrasted with the transparent whiteness of her beautiful countenance. Her hair was withdrawn from her forehead, and she wore neither cap nor bonnet, so that the whole face was conspicuously exposed, and every expression, therefore, visible to the spectators. She looked not pale from sickness, nevertheless she was pale; while in her tall, but round and well-proportioned form there was a delicacy and ease of motion, at the same time a sustained elevation in her whole deportment, which soon expelled those favourable sentiments at first awakened for the wretched Clifford, and excited in every bosom a feeling bordering upon detestation towards him as the seducer of so much loveliness. As soon as she appeared before the court, Clifford shrunk before the object of his base perfidy, as if conscience-stricken at the unfavourable impression which he saw she was but too likely to excite against him. The blood rushed for a moment into his cheeks with a most distressing impetuosity, spreading there a deep purple suffusion; but immediately left it, when the skin resumed its dull parchment hue, while the quivering eyelid closed over the sunken orb beneath it, as if to shut out at once from his view the world and its miseries. He listened with breathless anxiety to the evidence which was to decide his doom. It was brief but decisive. In a distinct tone, which was low, but neither feeble nor tremulous, Esther denounced Clifford as the murderer of her infant, by stabbing it in the breast with a knife.

The knife was produced in court, and she swore to it as the same with which the prisoner at the bar had inflicted the fatal stab that deprived her of

her babe. Her testimony could not be overthrown, and evidently made a strong impression upon the hearers. Clifford did not once raise his eyes, whilst she was delivering it; but the convulsive twitches of his countenance plainly denoted what was passing within him. Esther seemed studiously to avoid turning her face towards him, as if she was determined not to be diverted from her purpose, by the silent appeals which suffering naturally makes to our sympathies and our compassion. She was most severely cross-examined by the counsel for the defence; nevertheless, with all his legal acuteness, he could not impeach the integrity of her evidence. Her answers were brief but unembarrassed; the facts which she had to communicate, few, but conclusive. When she had retired, Clifford was asked if he had any thing to offer in his defence. He was dreadfully agitated; but, after a short pause, recovered himself sufficiently to address the court. He spoke as follows:—

“My Lord, and Gentlemen of the Jury; I have but few words to say, and as I hope for mercy from that eternal Judge, before whom, if I am convicted upon this atrocious charge, I must soon appear, those words will record the truth. It is not likely that, standing in the fearful position in which I now do, I should rashly run the hazard of going into the presence of Him, who is the dispenser of justice as well as of mercy, with a lie upon my lips, and with its taint upon my soul. Let this, then, be with you the pledge of my integrity. The witness whom you have just heard, is forsworn. However cunningly falsehood may be disguised in the garb of simplicity, it is not, therefore, the less falsehood because it is so disguised. If I am condemned, I shall have become its victim. The following are the facts which the prosecutor has so atrociously endeavoured to turn to my undoing. At her own request I met her, on the night mentioned in her evidence, on the spot where the supposed murder was committed, for which I now stand arraigned before you. After reproaching me with her ruin, she affected to desire a reconciliation, and to part from me in peace. She held her babe before me, and entreated for it a father’s blessing. I pronounced in the overflowing sincerity of my heart, the paternal benediction. At this moment, the child, which had been for some time in ill health, became suddenly convulsed. I snatched a penknife from my pocket, to cut the string of its dress, when the mother, in the agitation of her alarm, stumbled, thus forcing the infant against the knife, which instantly penetrated its side. I recoiled with consternation at the accident; but she wildly screaming, forced the little sufferer into my arms, streaming with its blood, alarmed the neighbouring cottagers, and taxed me as its murderer. These are the simple facts, and upon their truth I stake my soul’s eternal security. I am the victim of a disappointed woman’s vengeance.”

This address awakened no compassion for the unhappy man; on the contrary, it excited a murmur of indignation through the whole assembly. His countenance instantly fell as this token of popular feeling jarred upon his ear. The testimony of Esther had been supported by strong circumstantial evidence. The judge at length summed up, and the jury, without quitting the court, found the prisoner guilty. Upon hearing this fatal verdict, the wretched man fell back into the dock insensible. Esther, whose ear it had reached, for she was standing near the jury-box, after having long struggled with her emotions, was now so entirely overcome by them, that, when sentence of death had been passed upon the unhappy Clifford, she sunk upon the floor in convulsions, and in this pitiable state was taken from the court by her afflicted mother.

Clifford was now put into one of the condemned cells, and clothed in the coarse habit assigned to those who have forfeited their lives to the outraged laws of their country. He had only three days to prepare his soul for eternity. What a term for a wretch so immersed in sin, to prepare to meet

his omnipotent Judge! Was there no escape? None! The court had denied him all hopes upon earth, and what had he beyond? What but a prospect too black even for the imagination of despair! Nothing can be imaged to the mind so fearful, as the reflections of a man about to be launched upon the illimitable ocean of eternity, with such a burden of unexpiated sins upon his soul, as a forced penitence cannot remove; and standing upon the very verge of his awful destiny, looking through the microscopic perspective of his imagination into a near prospect of undefinable horrors. We have seen, indeed, instances of criminals who have met their doom with that stern obduracy of spirit which has enabled them to smile at the dreadful array of death, and curse the very Omnipotent before whose august presence they were about to appear. Shall we imagine, however, that because the tongue blasphemed, and the countenance could assume a smile, when the shaft of death was on the wing, the heart was at peace? No! Whatever may be the influence of a daring resolution upon the body, it cannot stifle the tortures of the spirit. The latter may be agonised, and writhe under pangs too frightful for contemplation, when the former seems not to suffer. With Clifford, however, the keen scourge of remorse had visited both with its terrible inflictions. He could look nowhere for comfort, nowhere for peace. He now, indeed, clung to the consolations of religion; but they offered no consolation to him. He was to die, not the death of the righteous man, but of the condemned — the degraded criminal. He was to perish, not in hope, but in abandonment; not a repentant prodigal, but a rejected rebel. How willingly would he now make reparation to the injured Esther for the wrongs he had heaped upon her, but it was too late. Alas! that he could recal the past; how different should be the tenor of his future life. This conclusion was wrung from him by his terrors; but past recollections, in spite of his now bitter contrition, poured through his bosom a tide of the most agonising emotions. Now the stings of conscience were felt, tipped with all their poisons. Remorse let loose her scorpions within him, which clung to and preyed upon his lacerated heart. The veriest wretch in the dark dungeon of the inquisition, groaning under his lately inflicted tortures, and anticipating the future rack, was a happy being, compared to him who had no better prospect than the endurance of sufferings that must be for ever, and shall be as great as they are illimitable.

The morning appointed for the execution at length dawned, but Clifford's preparation for another world was no further advanced, than when he had received the warning that his term of life was fixed. He had been too much engrossed by his terrors to allow him sufficiently to abstract his mind from the awfulness of his situation, and to repose his hopes upon that divine mercy, which is denied to none who seek it with a right disposition of soul, even in the hour of their extremity. He could not seek it. He could not crush the worm within, and he already seemed to feel that it would never die. It had a fearful vitality which worked upon every fibre of his frame, and reached even the impassive spirit. His hopelessness increased as the awful period drew nigh which was to terminate his earthly pilgrimage. He had no resource in reflection. His bosom was a volcano, which the lava of burning thought violently overflowed, streaming its scorching fires through every avenue of perception, and giving him, while yet upon the threshold of eternity, a terrible foretaste of hell.

Upon the fatal morning when his sentence was to be fulfilled, he rose from a feverish sleep, and threw himself upon his knees in agony. He could not pray. He had committed no prayer to memory, and his mind was in too wild a state of conflict with his terrors to enable him to frame one. He supplicated his God to have mercy upon him; but this was all the prayer he could offer up. The bell at length tolled the hour, when he was, according to the

terms of his sentence, to be taken from his cell to the place of execution, there to expiate his crime by the forfeiture of his life. He was conducted to the press-room. His legs scarcely supported him; and he was obliged to avail himself of the assistance of one of the turnkeys, or he would have fallen. He seated himself upon a low bench, in a state bordering upon absolute stupefaction, whilst his irons were knocked off and his hands bound, preparatory to his execution. He could scarcely articulate intelligibly, in consequence of the excited state of his mind. While the preparations for the last eventful scene of his life were in progress, Clifford, whose eyes had been closed in a paroxysm of mental excitation, heard his name pronounced in a low but distinct tone, and, suddenly looking up, beheld the wretch Esther beside him. She had undergone a considerable change in her appearance within the last three days. She now looked pale and haggard. There was a dark crimson spot on each cheek, but every other part of her countenance was colourless. The clear whiteness of her skin had assumed the sickly hue of disease: it was dull and sallow. The lustre of her eye, though still bright, had considerably faded; yet there was in it at intervals that same stern expression of resolved purpose which she had so frequently exhibited during the late trial, and which renewed in the bosom of the terrified criminal feelings little likely to soothe the desperate agonies of his heart. She approached him firmly. He shrunk from her, as he would have shrunk from a herald of the pestilence. "Clifford," said she at length, "my prophecy is about to be accomplished — the day of retribution is arrived. You are about to go where 'the prisoners rest together, and hear not the voice of the oppressor.' Let us part in peace." Clifford gasped — he spoke not, but turned from her with a convulsive shudder. A tear gathered into her eye, and rolled silently down her cheek — she however dashed it aside, and in an instant regained her self-possession. "I pity thee," she resumed, "but there are crimes of which it were criminal even to seek to remit the penalty. I confess, too, that it is a dear, though painful satisfaction to me, to witness the author of my everlasting shame, the victim of his own misdeeds; and if, at this moment I could pluck thee from the scaffold, still would I withhold from thee the arm of succour. Thou deservest to die. A thousand lives were all too little to atone for the wrongs which thou hast done me. Make thy peace with heaven, for the fearful day of audit is at hand — may God forgive thee!"

The procession was now ordered to move towards the drop, and Esther was in consequence obliged to quit the prison. She left the press-room, made her way through the crowd which had collected outside the walls, and placed herself almost immediately under the drop, whence she could obtain a perfect view of the execution, as if she anticipated a horrible satisfaction in witnessing the dying struggles of that man who had rendered her condition in this world one of unmitigated misery; and, perhaps, prepared for her one still more miserable in a world eternal. The vehement exacerbations with which she was struggling, were but too visible to those around her; their attention, however, was soon called to those more arresting objects which they had assembled to behold. Her breath came from her lungs in quick spasmodic gaspings, while the blood was forced into her very forehead by the violence of the conflict within her; yet she uttered not a cry. Resolve was still written legibly in every lineament of her quivering countenance. She made a desperate effort to be composed, and in part succeeded. A slight tremor of the lip, and a faint, hurried catching of the breath, less audible than a lover's whisper, were the only indications of those active fermentations of emotion which were busy within her bosom. The prisoner was now brought out, and appeared upon the drop, but so completely was he overcome, that he was obliged to be carried up the ladder to the platform. He was supported while the executioner adjusted the cord, looking rather

like a thing snatched from the grave, and into which the spark of animation had been just struck, than a creature in which that spark was about to be extinguished, and which the grave was ready to enclose. The foam oozed from the corners of his mouth, while the thin tear forced its way through the closed lids, fearfully denoting the horrors which were darting their thousand stings into his affrighted soul. There was a death-like stillness among the crowd. Not a sound was heard, save the occasional sigh of sympathy or the sob of pity, whilst the awful preparations were making previous to withdrawing the fatal bolt. All this while, Esther kept her eye fixed, with anxious earnestness, upon the platform. The preparations were at length completed, and the cap drawn over the eyes of the criminal. Expectation had become so painfully intense among the crowd, that their very breathings were audible. The bolt was now about to be withdrawn, when a voice was heard from among the assembled multitude — "He is innocent — I am forsworn!" Every eye was directed towards the spot. The speaker had fallen to the earth — it was Esther. She was lifted up, but no sign of animation appeared in her now ghastly features. She was instantly taken to a neighbouring surgeon, but no blood followed the lancet — she was dead. The sheriff happened to be on the spot, and immediately ordered the execution to be suspended, until more tangible evidence should be obtained. In the pocket of the unhappy girl, whom Clifford had so cruelly abandoned, was found a written confession which confirmed, in every particular, what he had declared upon his trial. He was immediately respited, and eventually released; yet the blight of infamy was upon him. He was given back, indeed, to existence; but his peace of mind was gone. His life was inglorious, still not without fruit. It was a sombre and a chequered scene. He had been stunned by the shock, to which he had so nearly fallen a victim. He had reaped the bitter harvest of seduction. All his bright prospects had been blasted; he resolved, therefore, that the rest of his days should be spent in making atonement for the past, and preparing for that future which is eternal. He lived an outcast, but died a penitent.

THOMAS HARTLAND THE SMUGGLER.*

[From "*The English Annual*," for 1835.]

At the extremity of a lonely valley, overlooking the ever-changing ocean, stood Combe Court, one of those picturesque structures which the antiquary would refer to the period when the castle gave place to the castellated mansion. Combe Court, however, in point of extent, could not properly lay claim to so imposing a title as the latter. Its design had originally been quadrangular, and a considerable portion of the building consisted of a rude tower, which bore the marks of having once been strongly fortified. But the old place seemed to have fallen on evil days, and there was an air of neglect and dilapidation about it, which told of coincident decay in the fortunes of its possessors. Its occupant, who was locally

* Lord Byron's remark, that "truth is stranger than fiction," is becoming a truism. The leading passages in this little narrative form part of the romantic history of a celebrated smuggler, nearly a century ago, respecting whom many traditions have been current on our western coast. Some portions of the story have necessarily been altered, and a similar liberty has been taken with the name of the principal actor, but the *locale* is unchanged.

known by the name of "Squire Hartland," was an individual who had moved in the higher ranks of society, and whose family had in the olden time held no unimportant position in the district with which it had for centuries been identified. But their fortunes had been shattered during the troublous times of the civil war; and the patrimony which the subject of this story came into possession of was reduced almost to a shadow by an event as disastrous as it was unforeseen. Hartland smiled on the pursuits of an extensive smuggler, and permitted him to lodge a valuable cargo in his dwelling; the matter got wind, and he was exchequered in an immense sum. The blow was overwhelming, and Hartland, who had for several years represented the venerable little borough of — in Parliament, withdrew wholly from society, and confined himself to the solitude of Combe Court, which, with one small farm, was all that he could now call his own. His hatred to the government had become deep and indelible, and he soon renewed his acquaintance with his old friends the smugglers. Hartland had been united in early youth to a woman whose gentle and feminine spirit was ill adapted for the stormy life which awaited her; and he had an only son, named Walter, who, almost from his infancy, displayed so decided a partiality for salt water, that his father—little foreseeing the events which were to take place—consented to his entering the naval service when he was scarcely twelve years old.

The wild life and hazardous pursuits of the followers of the "free trade," had many charms for a man of the bold and restless temperament of Hartland; and it was not long before it began to be rumoured that his fishing smack bore richer freights than herrings or mackerel:—still, owing probably to the extreme seclusion of the situation, and the great caution observed by his confederates, he had hitherto escaped the visits of the revenue officers. Shortly before the time when this story commences, Walter Hartland, to whom his father was passionately attached, paid his birth-place a visit, after many years' absence. The youthful Lieutenant could not long remain at the "Court," without discovering that his father was deeply engaged in smuggling transactions. As an officer of his majesty's navy, he was thus placed in a delicate and difficult position; and he took an early opportunity of seriously remonstrating with his father on the great hazard and disgrace attendant upon such a calling; but the warning was unheeded. Mrs. Hartland then united in imploring her husband to abandon all connexion with the lawless men with whose fortunes he had become involved—but Hartland's mind was then intently fixed on the successful prosecution of a very extensive transaction in which he had embarked nearly all his gains,—visions of wealth again floated before his eyes,—and the proffered counsel was spurned with anger. At length words arose between Walter and his father, and the latter in the heat of the moment uttered imprecations "not loud but deep" against his son, which ended in a parting as abrupt as it was melancholy. The die was cast. Thomas Hartland henceforth became a professed smuggler.

The occupation of a smuggler is looked upon with very different impressions by the inhabitants of the coast to those which are commonly associated with it by the dwellers in inland districts; and however demoralising and pernicious it may really be to those who pursue it, the followers of the "free trade" are, even at the present day, received outwardly with the same degree of notice as those who are engaged in the legitimate pursuits of commerce and industry. This fact was exemplified in the present instance; and those who had received the "Squire" after his misfortunes, with cold words and averted looks, now that rumours of his returning wealth began to prevail, would have sought his society with the same eagerness as ever. But they overshot their mark with Hartland.

Shortly after Walter's departure, the expected cargo arrived, and was housed, for the first time since the fatal discovery which had formerly led to his ruin, in the cellars of Combe Court, prior to its transmission into the interior of the country. Extensive preparations had been made for this purpose the following evening, when Hartland and several of his leading partners in the undertaking, who were anxiously awaiting the hour fixed for the approach of their confederates, were suddenly alarmed by the receipt of a communication to the effect that the run had reached the ears of the revenue officers, and that a force was to be despatched that evening to effect the seizure of the goods. This intelligence fell like a thunderbolt upon the little party assembled at Combe Court. The most daring and experienced lost for the moment their presence of mind; and now it was that the singular boldness and decision of the character of their leader first shone clearly out. Although almost every shilling he possessed in the world was at stake, he appeared unusually cool and collected, and was "up and doing," whilst others thought. There was only one chance of saving the property, and that was by opposing force to force. Ruin started him in the face in the event of a seizure; and should the attempt at resistance prove successful, the machinery already in operation would secure the safety of the goods, and provide for his support in another land.

At that hour it was certainly a bold step. Before the plan of defence had been fixed upon, the assailants might perhaps be within the vicinity of the house. It yet wanted two hours for the time fixed for the arrival of the associates of the smugglers, and there was no time to send for aid, which under other circumstances might easily have been procured from a village devoted to their interests, further on the coast. The party at the Court consisted of only eight persons, excluding Mrs. Hartland and a female servant, whose alarm may well be imagined.

It is as extraordinary as it is lamentable, how soon association with those with whom crime is familiar hardens the heart. Men shrink at first, but their better feelings rapidly become deadened, and, advancing step by step, at last they plunge into the abyss, and enter without fear or hesitation upon undertakings from which they would once have recoiled with horror. Such is but too often the case with those who, like the smuggler, make no scruple in evading the law; and Hartland, who had belonged to the high-born and the far-descended, now had become so far desperate in the pursuit of gain as deliberately to plan a scheme which must certainly be attended with the loss of human life.

The familiarity of the smugglers with scenes of peril and adventure, in some measure, made up for the smallness of their number; but it was the capabilities of the building for the purposes of defence, that they mainly relied on. The windows of the tower, which we have already spoken of, were placed at a considerable height from the ground, and intersected by massive stone mullions placed close together; and had the defenders been sufficiently numerous, the place might certainly have been held against a very superior force unsupported by artillery. But there was a short range of building connected with the tower, which was only partly covered by the loop-holes in the latter; the great object, therefore, now was to secure this part of the dwelling in such a way as to prevent a surprise at some particular point. The preparations for defence were soon completed; the furniture was piled in masses in defence of the doors and windows; and all the fire-arms and other defensive weapons were prepared and arranged for action, and placed for security within the walls of the tower.

The twilight was deepening into darkness, when a small party of men marched cautiously, yet rapidly, along a narrow winding road, which led down the valley towards the abode of Hartland. They paused on reaching a point in the road at a short distance in the rear of the building, but

which was concealed from the observation of its inmates by the massive proportions of an intervening rock that threw its broad shadow far across the narrow valley. The night was profoundly calm, and the measured, yet scarce-heard tramp of their footsteps, with the hoarse gurgling of a stream which forced its way along the bed of the glen, alone broke the deep stillness. The aged structure seemed wrapped in gloom; and not a single ray of light gave token of human habitation.

"Who goes there?" said Hartland, from one of the loop-holes of the tower, as the strangers marched onward, and neared the principal entrance.

"In the King's name," replied a firm voice, "we demand an entrance, or we will force it."

There was a moment's pause—a death-like stillness—and then the sharp report of a musket, followed by a stifled groan, told the result. The suddenness and unexpected violence of the defence stunned the assailants; and they disappeared in the darkness just as the second flash of light from all the smugglers simultaneously conveyed another lesson of the uselessness, indeed madness, of attempting to force an entrance against odds so immensely in favour of the assailed. The next quarter of an hour was passed by the outlaw and his little band in agonizing anxiety; but all remaining quiet, they concluded that the king's officers had retreated for a reinforcement. A shrill whistle was soon after recognised as a signal of the approach of the people who had been engaged to assist in the removal of the goods; and before many minutes had elapsed they began to arrive in considerable numbers.

About two-thirds of the cargo had been removed out of harm's way, when the scouts came in and gave the alarm. The smugglers immediately gathered around their leader—the lights were extinguished—the drivers of the pack-horses scampered away, and all again was still. After a brief but anxious consultation, it was decided that a show of defence should at first be kept up, and then that the parties should escape by the postern of the tower under cover of the darkness. This plan was, however, hastily abandoned on learning from an almost breathless scout, who had been sent up the glen, that the king's officers were at hand in great force, and therefore it was probable they would surround the building. The smugglers instantly fled; but one of the party, more devilish than the rest, without Hartland's knowledge, set several of the bales which yet remained in the cellar, on fire, before he quitted the tower.

The revenue officers advanced with extreme caution and gradually closed round the building. Preparations were made for forcing the principal entrance, when the appearance of a deep glow of light within the tower made them suddenly pause. Presently their suspicions were confirmed, and a dense column of smoke began to issue from the windows and crevices, accompanied by the crackling of timber and other combustibles. The foresight of the officer in command was probably the means of saving several lives. He anticipated, from the great strength and solidity of the walls, that the fire would be confined to the tower; and he apprehended, not without reason, that a quantity of gunpowder might have been left within it. He therefore judged it prudent to await the issue at a safe distance. The men had scarcely withdrawn, when a fearful crash burst on the night air; the massive walls cracked and shivered to their foundation—a mass of blazing materials was driven far upward and scattered around over field and flood. The report of the explosion rattled along the rocks of the shore and valley like successive salvos of artillery; and the sea-mews and other tenants of the craig shrieked in chorus, alarmed by the reiteration of noises so unusual.

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After that disastrous night Thomas Hartland was heard of no more on the

coast of Devon. Years passed away. Walter Hartland returned to his once happy home, and found it deserted and desolate. His parents were supposed to be numbered with the dead — and he now recalled with a bitter pang the quarrel with his father which had led to his departure. He knelt and offered up a prayer to his Creator for forgiveness, and then departed with a heavy heart.

* * * * *

The years 1746-7 were distinguished on the northern coast of Devon, for the extraordinary daring and remarkable dexterity of the smugglers. The efforts of the servants of government, although skillful and persevering, became almost unavailing. Seizures were rarely effected, and then seldom without the effusion of blood. The revenue officers at last declared their belief that the smugglers must be under the protection of his satanic majesty in person; and strange stories began to be circulated concerning a dark figure who was frequently seen taking an active part in directing or assisting their operations. This individual seemed indeed to bear a charmed life; always the last to retreat in time of danger — now in the thick of the affray, dealing blows with fearful effect on his adversaries, and then, like a will-o'-the-wisp, eluding their grasp, he baffled all the efforts to take him, with singular success and daring. Suddenly, however, he disappeared from the coast, and was believed to have perished in a desperate encounter in the month of January, 1747. Such was not the case: the stranger was Thomas Hartland, whose romantic history we shall now resume.

Few spots in the British seas then presented greater advantages for the residence of a smuggler than Lundy Island. From its situation, it might be said to form the key of the Bristol Channel; and its capabilities for the purposes either of defence or concealment, were certainly unrivalled. The appearance of Lundy Island, when viewed from seaward, is singularly picturesque and dreary. Surrounded on every side by inaccessible rocks, which often rise almost perpendicularly to a great height above the level of the ocean, in some parts it requires no great stretch of fancy to imagine it one vast fortification, with loop-holes at occasional intervals; whilst in others, the black and overhanging summits of the cliffs, worn into vast caverns and yawning excavations by the assault of the waves, create fearful apprehensions of their instability in the mind of the spectator from beneath. Here the sea — even during the gentle breezes of summer — is seldom altogether tranquil: and, on the calmest day, the deep intonations, and ceaseless war of the waters as they dash idly against the rocks, come impressively on the ear, when heard on the summit of the steep. But it is in stormy weather that Lundy Island is seen to most advantage; and the wildness and sublimity of the scene at such periods is certainly not surpassed in any part of our western coast, — then indeed

“ ———— when all that sea
The terrible Atlantic, breaks its rocks
In thundering conflict, the unearthly howl
Might almost wake the dead.”

The only entrance to this remarkable island is a steep winding path through the rocks on the eastern beach, scarcely sufficient to admit the passage of two persons abreast. On every other side it is securely fortified by nature against the assaults of man. A retreat affording such extraordinary facilities for the successful prosecution of his wild and hazardous profession, did not escape the far-sighted glance of Hartland. He, however deemed it prudent to wait until time should have so changed his appearance and obliterated the remembrance of his history as to render his residence in this natural stronghold a matter of security. He therefore

fixed his residence on the coast of Holland when he first quitted his native country. After many years had elapsed, during which he had commanded a smuggling lugger, which traded to the southern coast of England, he began occasionally to revisit his native shores, his former knowledge of which now conducted most materially to his success. In course of time he confined himself exclusively to this trade, how successfully we have already glanced at. Lundy Island, which had in his early youth been populous, was now desolate and deserted, in consequence of the atrocities perpetrated by a French privateer, the proprietor was therefore anxious to obtain an occupant, and closed with Hartland on easy terms.

Our hero soon formed a little colony around him, and before many months had elapsed, a group of cottages nestled amongst the rocks near the entrance of the singular pass from the beach. It was a wild little place, and bore all the indications that its inhabitants ploughed the deep and not the land. In outward appearance indeed it might have been taken for a fishing village — for nets hanging to dry, strings of fish, the tackling of a boat, or a broken oar, met the eye on either side: but the pursuits of its people were of a less peaceful character, and oftentimes the place was the haunt of men whose lives were as desperate as their fortunes. Hartland, however, although chiefly engrossed with the more lucrative profession of smuggling, did not lose sight of the occupations of his youth; for he introduced live-stock, and even deer into the island, and sometimes himself took into hand the plough and the sickle. His own dwelling was situated within hail of the village, at the summit of the rocks, commanding an extensive view over the waters of the Channel. Here he lived — at once uniting the opposite pursuits of smuggler, farmer, and fisherman; commanding the implicit obedience of the little band of men he had progressively attached to his fortunes, and ensuring their fidelity by the kindness as well as by the firmness of his character. That such an individual, or perhaps we may say, such a community, should have dwelt in security on an island within a few leagues of the coast of Devon, in the middle of the last century, may well be deemed an anomaly at the present day — but such was nevertheless the fact. Suspicion certainly was excited, and the island had more than once been subjected to the visits of the officers of government; but such were the precautions taken, and such the skill of Hartland, that the search was unattended with any unpleasant result. He met all the inquiries of the officers with apparent openness and unconcern; drew their attention to the flourishing state of his farm and his live stock, and seldom failed to send them away completely blinded by his hospitality and his adroitness. He was not so fortunate, however, with his landlord, who soon discovered that he had let his property at too low a rent: many disputes arose, and several attempts were actually made to dispossess him by main force: but he continued to keep possession; blocked up the pass, and openly set his opponents at defiance.

"Ellen," said Hartland to his wife, one afternoon in September, "walk with me to St. Helen's Chapel, the Adventure is expected up the Channel, and I hear that sharks are abroad."

They walked almost in silence to the loftiest elevation of the island, and Hartland seated himself on a fragment of the ancient chapel, and anxiously scanned with his glass the surrounding ocean. There was something in the mouldering ruin of that solitary little Christian temple looking out in this wild spot over the waste of waters, that appealed impressively to the feelings even of such a man as Hartland, whose heart, though deeply hardened, was still alive at times to better impulses.

"Hartland," said Ellen — as he laid down his glass after a long pause — "I have been thinking of the happy day that we passed together at this spot when Walter was four years old: the recollection is mournful even

at this lapse of years, when that dear boy is either no more, or knows not whether his unhappy parents are numbered with the living or the dead. Hartland, I am weary of our present miserable life: we are growing old now, and ought to be at peace. You never go out with the lugger, but I expect to see you brought back to me a lifeless corse."

"Away with this womanish folly, Ellen," replied Hartland,—but there was something about his manner which contradicted his words, for Ellen had opened the flood-gates of his memory.

"You spoke of Walter—and what of Walter?"

"He is living, Ellen. I have heard this morning that the Wasp revenue cruiser is expected in the Channel, and that her commander's name is Hartland—it must be he."

The mother clasped her hands.

"And you expect he will pay Lundy a visit?"

"He may be our—ruin, Ellen. I have half a mind to quit the trade before long, now that he is come on the station."

At this instant his attention became fixed by the appearance of a sail in the distant horizon; at last he laid down his glass, and said: "I must go with the Adventurer to-night, Ellen; my word is pledged with my partners in the venture, but I had rather it had been any other night in the year than this. It may be folly, but I always dread the anniversary of the last fatal night at the Court—nothing ever prospers that is done on that day."

Ellen Hartland turned pale at this intelligence; but she knew that it was useless to remonstrate with her husband after his word had been pledged: for lawless as was his profession, he had never yet been known to break his word.

The evening was drawing on apace when the lugger, loaded with a valuable cargo, neared the eastern beach. It was not without a superstitious thrill of impending misfortune that Hartland pushed off to his favourite vessel that night;—he seemed to have lost the confident spirit which he usually possessed on similar occasions, and paced the after-deck apparently unconscious of all around him, until aroused by Captain Penlerrick.

"Donner! master Hartland, you look confoundedly squally to night!"

"Oh, nothing, Pen. I have not been exactly in trim—but there's a clear sky aloft now. You know the Wasp is expected in the channel, I fancy?"

"Oh ah, but he'll never sting us—donner! he thinks himself d—d deep, that fellow, but he must be a d—d deal deeper before he'll catch Martin Penlerrick."

"Ay ay, Pen," but the Wasp's in new hands now my boys, they say. Luff George—there," said Hartland, speaking to the helmsman, as the lugger neared the coast, "the old craft's done wonders to-night—we must keep her off for an other half hour."

The wind freshened considerably with the turn of the tide, and the appearance of the night was becoming wild, if not stormy. This was not observed without some anxiety by the smugglers; calm weather was of essential importance in landing a cargo; however, the run on the present occasion was to be made at perhaps the most favourable spot on the whole line of coast for such an undertaking; so that unless the night turned out actually stormy, there was little to apprehend in the shape of danger. Hartland forgot all his forebodings in the anxious excitement of the moment as the Adventure stood in for the shore. The tide, fanned by the freshness of the breeze, rolled onwards in its advance, with aggravated violence from the main; the lugger which was deeply laden, rolled heavily, and was frequently struck by a heavy sea fore and aft. Right a-head, glimmering through the darkness and the scud, a solitary signal-light on the coast could now be discerned; the Adventure then hoisted a lantern, and bore down upon it.

Although, as we have stated, Carn Cove was singularly adapted for the successful prosecution of a smuggling adventure, yet it required no small degree of local skill and knowledge, on a dark and boisterous night, to steer a vessel safely within the entrance of the natural basin or harbour where the landing was to be effected. On one side a lofty ledge of rocks, which contracted into a curve at their extremity, shot out into deep water; and on the opposite side, a large and steep mass of shingles, thickly covered with sand and bent, rose as the coast receded. A considerable rivulet trickled over the hard sandy bottom at ebb tides, along the foot of this narrow opening, which afforded, except in very stormy weather, a tolerably secure shelter to a few coasters or small craft. This place was situated about half a mile from Combe Court, and Hartland's life had probably been originally partly influenced by the facilities which it offered to the trade of the smuggler.

Captain Penlerrick himself took the helm as the vessel rapidly neared the cove: "Port, there, port steady!" sung out Hartland, as she entered the deeply agitated element; and dashing through the breakers, in another minute her sails were down, and she was brought up in comparatively smooth water within the narrow channel. The contrast was as striking as it was instantaneous. All was now bustle and confusion. The sand-hills became covered in a few minutes, as if by magic, by a numerous party; the hatches were thrown open, and in an incredibly short space of time, the disembarkation of the cargo commenced, and Hartland, accompanied by the mate, came ashore.

It was a wild scene;—the hoarse voice of the waters in the channel mingling with the crash of the breakers as they burst against the rocky coast with fearful violence; the flashing of the lights as they appeared and disappeared in the darkness, with almost supernatural rapidity, sometimes gleaming on the lofty and dim-seen rocks and dancing waters, sometimes reflecting the wild features and figures of the smugglers engaged on the beach; the rattling and howling of the wind amongst the half-bent sails and tackling of the lugger, against which columns of sparkling spray were frequently bursting, and the swinging of the lantern on her foremast—all combined to give a strange and vivid effect to the scene, which was greatly augmented by its wild and hazardous character. More than half the cargo had been landed and conveyed away to a place of safety, when a suppressed cry of danger arose amongst the smugglers further on the beach, which instantaneously reached the watchful ears of Hartland, who was standing, almost surrounded with the drift, at its edge. He comprehended at a thought that they had been betrayed. But he had not time for reflection, for his stern voice had scarcely given the word to "douse the lights," before the advanced party of the king's officers closed with the foremost of the smugglers. In a moment every light was extinguished either afloat or ashore. The smugglers were completely "taken aback," and the well-known voice of their commander to "stand fast," was for the first time lost or unheeded in the confusion. Hartland, however, did not lose his self-possession; and, aided by the mate, had overpowered three of his assailants, who were on the point of gaining the boat, but such was the darkness of the night that the blows aimed for a foe might prove fatal to a friend. Hartland saw that all depended on the possession of the boat, and he had just stepped on her gunwale with the mate, and was on the point of shoving her off, when he was seized from behind by an iron grasp. He lost his balance, and fell with his assailant on the verge of the surf, before his comrade had time to effect any thing in his aid. A deadly struggle now ensued, and Hartland had just freed himself from the gripe of his enemy, who fell into the water with a heavy plunge, when others of the king's officers seized him, and he was dragged upon the shore by their joint efforts.

The beach was clear of smugglers, and the Adventure was standing out to sea !

* * * * *

The morning found Hartland a prisoner in the home of his fathers. He had passed the night in a state of mental stupefaction, for he had been recognised when conveyed to the Court by a man who had formerly been his tenant. As he lay alone in darkness and in solitude, the recollection of the murder of the king's officer on that very spot pressed upon his mind with painful intensity. He saw nothing but a felon's death before him ; and he called to mind the counsel and the warnings of his excellent wife with the deepest remorse and agony of spirit. Exhausted by the vividness of his sensations, he had late in the morning dropped into a troubled and uneasy slumber, when he was aroused by the entrance of one of the sentinels, who informed him that a female was without seeking for admission. Almost before he had time to inquire the name of the stranger, his wife, enveloped in a huge cloak, softly opened the door, and he could scarcely believe the vision to be real until his own Ellen fell, almost fainting, into his arms. Hartland wept aloud.

"My Hartland," she whispered, after the sentinel had retired, "I am come to save you. Penlerrick has behaved nobly, and will be off Blackwater Cove to-night when the tide flows."

Hartland stared in mute astonishment.

"What is the meaning of this, Ellen? how am I to escape from this place? If you reckon upon bribing the guards you will find yourself disappointed, and any attempt at rescue would now be madness."

"I have thought of neither, love. Change a part of your dress with me — wrap this cloak about you, and trust to me for the rest."

Hartland at first remonstrated, but his wife's resolution was formed ; the transformation was quickly effected, and he was about to clasp the being, who had given so beautiful a proof of the depth of woman's affection and constancy, to his bosom for the last time, when she said, "Hartland, I have two solemn requests to make before we part. Promise me — nay, swear it by Him who is almighty and all-merciful, that from this day you quit the accursed trade for ever!"

Hartland pressed his wife's hand in mute acquiescence.

"I have one more request. Our dear Walter is, I understand, on the lookout for the Adventure — little thinking that she is the last hope of his unhappy father — and it is possible — which God in his mercy avert ! — that you may meet as enemies. Swear then, my husband, that you lift not your hand against your son in the hour of danger ; do this, and forget not your Creator, Hartland," she added in a low and deeply-agitated tone, "and then can I die in peace."

Hartland again assented, and they hastily parted.

The smuggler passed the sentinels in the outer room, and was beginning to breathe with renewed hope, when, as he was emerging from the building, he caught the voices of two of the officers who had taken him the preceding night. His presence of mind did not forsake him. He stooped considerably, and buried his face in his wife's handkerchief, as if distracted with grief.

"What strapping wench have we here, Tom?" said the foremost of the officers, when Hartland advanced from the threshold — "Avast, there, old girl ; been administering some comfort within, eh?"

"Keep back, Jones," said his companion, as the former was about to advance, and have a nearer view of the supposed female ; "let her alone — she is the prisoner's wife, poor thing!"

Hartland passed on as if unconscious of the presence of any one.

"She may well be in the downs," said the second officer, as the subject

of their conversation was almost beyond hearing — “that her husband ’ll swing for the old business, I’d lay a guinea to a groat.”

With this comfortable assurance, Hartland disappeared round an angle of the building.

* * * * *

It was with deep anxiety that this bold though altered man waited the turn of the tide that night. Blackwater Cove, which had been fixed upon for his embarkation, was situated in a very wild and precipitous part of the coast, but seldom trodden by the foot of man. He had reached the appointed place of refuge early in the afternoon; it was an aged structure, which had been erected — at what period and for what purpose is unknown — in a narrow descent amongst the rocks leading to the beach, which it almost overhung. The hours passed away with painful tardiness; — time appeared to the restless mind of the outlaw to stand still: and in the occasional gusts of wind which wailed wildly through the rain, he more than once fancied he heard the sounds of his pursuers. As he listened to the sullen moaning and dashing of the waves on the rocky shore below, he thought of his wife, alone and deserted on the wide world, and of his son whom he was perhaps never destined to behold more, till he wept — stern as had been his soul — in very bitterness. And now it was that the pure and the upright man would have clung to that hope which never forsakes the righteous — but there had too long been no place in his heart for holy thoughts; he looked not for consolation where alone it was to be found, and therefore he was desolate.

Hartland wandered forth from his retreat at nightfall, and climbed to the summit of the cliffs, which commanded an extensive view over the channel beneath. It was not long before the moon rose, but she sailed amongst extensive masses of dark clouds, which imparted an endless variety of tints to the scenery. The night was altogether as favourable as could be wished; — the wind was on the best quarter for the approach of the lugger, and was fresh, without being boisterous. About half-flood, after Hartland had looked till he was weary on the gleaming sea, his anxiety was painfully excited by the appearance of a human figure on the summit of the lofty cliff on the opposite side of the cove. He gazed at the object for some time to convince himself that it was not a point of the rock, but it was not long before its movements, which were clearly thrown out on the sky-line, assured him of its reality. A thousand agitating thoughts now floated across his mind. Had his steps been traced, or did the stranger belong to some party on the watch for the lugger? The former supposition was possible, but the latter seemed altogether improbable; but there the figure remained, and it was quite certain that no person would station himself in such a position at such an hour, unless for the purposes of observation. Whilst he was thus engaged in anxious thought, the Adventurer at last came in sight under a press of canvas; Hartland rushed to the beach with all the eagerness of despair, and when he looked up to the dark summit of the distant rock, the figure had disappeared.

The lugger hove-to when she approached near the vast shadow cast by the cliffs, and a boat immediately put off from her to the shore, opposite the ruined building. It was not until Hartland had embarked, and the boat had shot off from the beach, perhaps two cables’ length, that he became aware another boat had come into the cove. The circumstance was observed at the same moment by the crew both of the lugger and her boat; Captain Penlerrick instantly signalled Hartland, and putting the helm up, bore down upon him. The stranger now came distinctly in sight: she was a large galley, apparently well manned, under a press of canvas, and evidently aware of the sailing qualities of her larger chase. The struggle now became intensely interesting. The smugglers strained every nerve, and did all that

art could accomplish, but the experienced eye of their commander told him that it would be next to a miracle if they could get alongside the lugger before her opponents; for the galley, impelled by a favouring breeze, gained upon her chase with fearful rapidity. Penlerrick also, by edging in further towards the shore, now saw that he had placed himself in the most imminent hazard of being taken; but he was determined to run all risks to save Hartland. The lugger now fired at the king's boat; and the contest had nearly at once been decided, for the party in the galley heard the shot whiz close a-head of her bow. The echo of the discharge had scarcely died away amongst the rocks, when Hartland's boat was close alongside, the galley having dropped slightly astern by hugging the wind too closely under the lee of the land. The heart of the outlaw, which had been alternately rent with hope and anxiety during this brief but animating chase, revived when he neared his favourite vessel; and he forgot, in the deep excitement of the moment, all his promises and his perils, when he saw that there was now no alternative but to struggle hand to hand with the officer of his king. The crew of the lugger, who had watched the exertions of their shipmates with breathless interest, cheered loudly when the little boat ran alongside; the lugger instantly paid off, in order to get the wind again abaft the beam, but before she had got way, the galley was up with her. Hartland had only just stepped on the deck of the lugger, when the officer in command of the king's boat, followed by several others, cutlass in hand, boarded on her lee-quarter! It was no time to hesitate;—at the very instant Hartland raised his pistol at the young officer, the moon, which had for several minutes been obscured by a cloud, shone brightly out: he started, and a conviction—fearful yet indefinite—of familiarity with that face, came across him; but his hand was on the trigger, and in the agitation of the moment he fired! The gallant young man reeled backwards, and fell dead on the deck, with a deep and piercing cry. By this time the captain and crew had taken part in the defence. A brief but desperate encounter took place; and the king's men, stunned by the loss of their leader, and taken at a disadvantage in point of numbers, were beaten; but not before the deck was crimsoned with the blood of both parties. The wind was freshening, and before many minutes had elapsed, the lugger, with every thread out she could muster, was flying through the waves with accelerated speed; and by the time that Hartland was awake to the full consciousness of his deed, she was rapidly distancing her opponent.

The remainder of our story is soon told. Hartland was seen no more on the coast of England; and it was popularly believed that he ended his days and endeavoured to atone for his crimes within the walls of a convent in Portugal. Mrs. Hartland, who had been liberated soon after the discovery of the artifice by which she had effected her husband's escape, is said to have died suddenly, on hearing of the lamentable death of her son; and Lundy Island once more became deserted and desolate.

THE INTERCEPTED LETTER.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "TRIALS AND TRIUMPHS."

[From "*The Friendship's Offering*," for 1836.]

WHAT an idol is an only child! With what an indescribable intensity of feeling does a father who has buried his first love, gaze upon his motherless daughter, — beautiful in her grief for the dead, — beautiful in her affection for her living parent. All his thoughts, feelings, anticipations and reflections, all his earthly interest, and heavenly hopes, are blended with the image of his child. Through her beauty and sweetness he mourns the departed, through her gentleness, and goodness he worships his Maker; for her he is ambitious, diligent, or anxious, according as his situation in life exposes him to the temptations of ambition, requires of him the toils of diligence, or harasses him with the trembling feelings of anxiety. In his eye she is perfection, and his affectionate pride in her leads him to attempt to make her more than perfection. He has just been taught, by an awful visitation of Providence, how perishable and transient are life's blessings and our mortal companions; yet with the bitterness of this discipline on his heart, he builds again the palace of hope on foundations quite as frail, and his spirit reposes with a confidence that eternity alone can warrant on a creature fleeting as time, and as uncertain of continuance as the repose of a spring-born butterfly.

Such were the feelings with which the father of Lucy Rushton wept over his child, when he returned from the funeral of his wife. Mr. Rushton was a clergyman of good family, but not of great fortune; his sole dependence was a small living, and he had married a lady of higher family than his own, — not altogether and very decidedly in opposition to the will of her friends, but with their very cold consent, and but ill concealed reluctance. He lived happily with his wife, but not long: — her frame was feeble, her health was delicate, her spirits tremblingly but quietly cheerful; her affection for her husband and her only child, and her delight in their society, formed for her so great a fulness of delight in being, that she thought of no higher bliss in mortal life. Surely it is a pleasant thing to have our world at home, to find the most cheerful warmth at our own fire-sides, the pleasantest seat in our own chairs, the balmiest sleep on our own beds, and the most interesting conversation with the inmates of our own home and the members of our own family! — When one of this happy three had gone down to the grave, the remaining two became to each other so much the more intensely interesting and important. To a thoughtful and considerate parent, the education of an only child is an object sufficiently absorbing to engross the whole attention, and to fill the whole soul; and where beyond the circle of home can an affectionate child look for wisdom to direct, and for affection to bless? Thus these two felt mutually dependent on each other. They were sincere in their mutual thought, and happy in the sincerity of it; the father that no daughter was like unto his, and the daughter that no father was like unto hers. Lucy was but fourteen years old when she lost her mother, but even at that early age she had reached her full stature, and was distinguished by a look of thoughtfulness and reflection

beyond her years. But there was no pedantry in her thoughtfulness, there was no affectation in her gravity. Long indeed before she could know the meaning of sorrow, and when as yet she had shed only the tears of childhood, her look was staid and placid, and that with such a marked expression of sobriety, that a stranger by a passing glance could not but be struck with the interesting aspect of the child. She was thoughtful, not by affectation, not by means of sorrow, but by mere instinct. She used to look grave among her playthings, but not to sigh, for there was a pleasant calmness in the depths of her spirit, and her look of sedateness was but the manifestation of her deep joy,—her unruffled gladness in being. That, however, which most of all excited her father's pride, and drew his heart towards her with an almost reverence of love and affection, was the clear honesty of her countenance, exhibiting the profound simplicity of her heart. Nothing could exceed her utter ingenuousness,—you could not look upon her speaking eyes without seeing that they told the truth; hers was a countenance that could not, that would not deceive; her eyes were windows through which you might read her heart. The tone of her voice was also very beautiful; so clear, and so unhesitating, and so confiding. Conscious of nothing but truth within, she suspected nothing but truth in all with whom she conversed. Her understanding also was good, and accompanied by a sufficient aptitude to learn; and thus to the eye of her father she presented a moral and intellectual image perfectly satisfactory and delightful. With such a pleasant companion as this, it is not to be wondered at that the father's time passed smoothly away; and yet, though he loved his home, he neglected not his duty to his parish, but he visited the abodes of sickness, he carried consolation to the bed-side of the dying, and he withheld not his feet from the threshold of poverty, or his hand from contributing to the alleviation of distress. His affectionate daughter also became proficient in the work of charity, and few things are more conducive to true cheerfulness of mind than doing good in a good spirit. The sentimental distributors of annual blankets, and the advertized donors of coals by the bushel, no more understand what true charity is than do the cockney catchers of hedge-sparrows understand the science of ornithology. A blanket, a bushel of coals, will not cure all the ills of mortality. There are sorrows of heart, there are pains of a broken spirit, for which there is more balm in the voice of kindness than in the purse of the wealthy, even in the hands of liberality. Lucy Rushton's bright eyes, soberly cheerful looks, and musical voice, were such treasures to the poor people of the village that they would not have sold them, if they could, for gold. She was happy in contributing, as far as in her lay, to the alleviation of the sorrows of the poor, and she could listen with such an exemplary patience to the long stories of the aged, that they thought her the wisest, and the nicest young lady that ever lived. All who saw the affectionate father and his gentle daughter could not but see how happy they were with each other, and could not but think that their life was all placidness, calmness, and unmingled bliss. But "the heart knoweth its own bitterness," and there was indeed a bitter sediment at the bottom of that sweet cup of life, which Mr. Rushton had to drink; for while he looked with pride upon his guileless child, and saw day after day the development of those graces and virtues, of which from the very first dawn of reason she had given such good promise, he could not help thinking, also, that a time must come when she must be left to other guardianship, and when other eyes less partial than those of a father must watch over her. Yet, in the moments of sadness which this thought occasioned him, he comforted himself by thinking that the best and most effectual provision which a parent could make for a child against the trials of life, was the inculcation of sound moral and religious principles. "Who is he that will harm you, if ye be

followers of that which is good?" — The wicked cannot, and the good will not.

Five years passed after the death of her mother, and then Lucy Rushton was entirely an orphan — fatherless and motherless. A new home was now prepared for her reception, and an almost new mode of life was set out for her. She went from the narrow and humble dwelling of a country clergyman to a large and stately family mansion, the residence of her mother's family, whom, indeed, she had occasionally visited, and whom she knew about as well as the eye of the unskilful knows a statue. The family consisted of Sir William Kennett, her mother's brother, and his lady — a cold, quiet, and formal couple, who seemed to have been stupified by the study of propriety, and who had scarcely any will of their own, or indeed any wish to have a will. The ruling spirit of the mansion was Lucy's maternal grandmother, the Lady Sarah Kennett, who from a noble family had condescended to ally herself to the semi-nobility of a baronet, and who, thinking that condescension had gone far enough, did never cordially forgive her daughter for having married an undistinguished clergyman. Lady Sarah was a most extraordinary woman, proud in spirit, but with no bustling haughtiness; commanding, but with no imperiousness of manner; exquisitely accurate and precise as to all the superficial formalities of life, her god was the world's eye, and her religion was conformity to the dictates of society. She had, indeed, none of the activity of unkindness, nor any of the spirit of kindness. She could not speak to the heart, for she was scarcely sensible of the existence of a heart, save as a physical apparatus by which the blood is propelled through the veins; the style of her intellect was cleverness, that external kind of wisdom which the lightly thinking world can easily see and can glibly praise, — a manifest exhibition, though not a fidgety ostentation of ability. There are some persons who carry their hearts in their eyes; so there are others whose wisdom rises to the surface, glances in the eye, dances on the tongue, and modulates every movement of the frame; and there is nothing which so much and so completely drives wisdom to the surface as an ambition to rule, govern and manage others; for on what principle can we presume to direct the movements of others, but by the possession of superior wisdom? — and how can we convince others of our wisdom unless we take especial care to let them see it? Lady Sarah Kennett had ruled from infancy. She had by a no very difficult dexterity contrived to have her own way even in childhood; and in youth she had governed her parents, she had governed her husband, she had governed her children, and now she was prepared to govern her grandchild, and perhaps to exercise over her a stricter discipline of subjection, in consideration and in memory of her mother's partial disobedience.

When Lucy entered Kennett Hall as her future home, her first thought was of the pleasure with which she had been accustomed to quit that region of frigidity, after the short and formal visits which she had made there with her father, and at this painful reminiscence the tears fell from her eyes as freely as the drops of rain from a summer cloud. A certain quantity of sorrow even the accurate and sensible Lady Sarah Kennett would allow to the mourner who bewailed the death of her parent; but there was a point beyond which weeping seemed to her ladyship to be excessive, and therefore improper. Alas, alas! how strangely domineering are mankind over each other's hearts; presuming to regulate and measure out the various expressions of joy and sorrow; sometimes blaming excess and sometimes reproving defect, as though it were in the power of the mind and will to feel or not to feel. Nothing could be more true than the remarks which Lady Sarah made, or rather repeated on the subject of human sorrow; so true were they that they have stood the test of ages, and have been repeated till all the world knows them by heart; but with all their truth they are totally

ineffective in suppressing those tears which flow from a wounded spirit. Poor Lucy, in having lost her father, had lost all that she had loved in the world, and all that loved her. True indeed it is, that her father's parishioners, from the highest to the lowest had esteemed, liked, respected, yes, and had even loved her according to their fashion, and she also had with a human and christian sympathy loved them; but when her father was gone she had lost her home-love; her heart was as a city broken down, and without walls; it dwelt in a fenceless solitude, and shivered in the wilderness of society. Kind words indeed were spoken to her, but there was nothing kind but the words; they were modulated by formality, not melodized by affection; they were spoken rather by heart than from the heart. But the truly good are never entirely unhappy; for it is one essential of goodness that it thinks humbly of itself, and as it does not highly rate its deserts, it does not highly raise its expectations. Gratefully, therefore, did Lucy receive all that even looked like kindness, or assumed the aspect of affection, and she sought with much diligence for something amiable and loveable in her grandmother, her uncle and her aunt; and she dwelt with delight on the few bright spots that she could find, however small they might be. So they who love gold dig deeply for it into the earth, and for the sake of a few grains of that which is so precious, they will sift and search over mountains of sand. But Lucy was not happy; her father's place was not supplied, the memory of him cleaved strongly to her heart, and the image of him who was not, became dearer to her than the presence and the sight of those who were. Though she was not happy, so far as buoyant cheerfulness is the manifestation of happiness, yet she gradually grew so accustomed to her sorrowful recollections that she took a mournful pleasure in them. Some persons enjoy laughter, some enjoy tears — some take pleasure in the society of the living, and some in the memory of the dead.

Now the time came that Lucy should lay aside her mourning garments, and this she did with much reluctance, for it was like parting with a memorial of her beloved father. Her form was graceful and her figure good, so that she well became whatever dress she wore, and, as her education had been rather mental than bodily, she was by no means studious of ornament; yet a well tempered mind superinduced a kind of instinctive propriety in dress, which converted neatness itself into the highest degree of ornament. A change of habit naturally draws and fixes observation, and Lucy's fine person irresistibly attracted the attention, and commanded the admiration of her frigid relatives. As Sir William Kennett was childless, Lucy was presumptive heiress to the estate; therefore she was regarded by her kindred with some degree of pride as being nearer to them than she would have been had there been any other probable inheritors of the property. The pride which Lady Sarah Kennett felt in her grand-daughter differed from the feeling with which the young lady had been regarded by her father: his was the pride of his own approbation; hers was the pride in the admiration of others. Every where was Lucy exhibited by her grandmother with all a grandmother's pride, and many were the gratifying compliments paid to the clergyman's orphan child. Since the decease of Mr. Rushton, indeed, Lady Sarah Kennett regarded her grand-daughter with an increased feeling of approbation, — affection it must not be called, for her ladyship was totally incapable of any such feeling; but she viewed her now as more immediately connected with her own family. There was, however, to Lucy a great bitterness in the thought of her grandmother's increased kindness; for the young lady could plainly enough discern that she had formerly been treated with distant coldness on her father's account; and that now she was beloved only because her father was removed: she could not sympathize with, and return that love, for much of her heart was in her father's grave.

Kennett Hall was not a place of great festivity. It pleased Lady Sarah that her son Sir William should not open his house miscellaneously to a multitude of visitors, but that with due decorum and well managed condescension, the select few should be admitted to visit at the Hall. This select few was a numerous company compared to the society to which Lucy had been accustomed in her father's time; but scarcely any of the visitors had paid much attention to her, for such was the governing power of Lady Sarah, that she not only ruled over all the inmates of her house, but her despotism extended even to her visitors, who by the way, were rather her son's visitors than hers; but her son was a mere shadow—the actual master of the house was virtually a cypher. Lady Sarah seemed to think that so long as Lucy wore her mourning there was so far some connexion kept up with the memory of her father; but when the garments of sorrow were laid aside, then it seemed as though the memory of the dead was buried in the grave that held his mortal body. Then Lady Sarah began to patronize her grand-daughter, and she gave her visitors leave also to notice the young lady.

Amongst the visitors admitted to Kennett Hall was Mr. Rushton's successor, the Rev. Henry Calvert, whose first visit was paid about two months after the decease of Mr. Rushton, and whose second visit, for he was invited annually, was about two months after Lucy had laid aside her mourning. At his first visit, like a modest young scholar, he scarcely spoke but when he was spoken to, and seldom was a word at table uttered save by Lady Sarah herself, or by her ladyship's express—and almost expressed—permission; the talk had been languid common-place, a thing which Mr. Calvert had not studied, and in which therefore he was not very able to shine. At his second visit, however, the ice of the Hall was broken, and Lucy was regarded as one of the party, and permission was given to any guest to address her as such, and her grandmother no longer awed her into silence by a transient frown, or crushed her into insignificance by drawing away the attention of the person with whom she might have ventured to enter into conversation. Lady Sarah, we have said, was a clever woman, very, very, very clever—but notwithstanding her extreme cleverness she was not altogether without understanding; there are some persons, as the reader must know, whose whole substance of intellect is altogether whipped up into the froth of cleverness, and who have no substratum of understanding at all; but this was not absolutely the case with Lady Sarah, for though her cleverness was by far the preponderating quality of her mind, yet she had understanding enough to distinguish between a man of sense and a simpleton; and an immense deal of cleverness with a little understanding goes much farther in this world of ours, than a great profundity of understanding garnished with only a slight degree of cleverness. Her ladyship, therefore, discerned at Mr. Calvert's second visit, that he was really a man of good understanding; and for the sake of displaying her grand-daughter's erudition and intellect, she permitted Lucy to make a third in the party of conversation, leaving Sir William and his lady to talk common-place talk with the more common-place part of the party. Lady Sarah Kennett, alas! forgot, if she had ever known, that men's hearts are lost through the eye, and women's through the ear. She thought that love was to be made only in a dual solitude,—in shady groves, in moonlight walks, in sighing *l'le-a-lles*, by pressing hands and palpitating hearts. Even metaphysics, the driest and most unprofitable of all topics of speculation and talk, may be made the means of making love, and that without any degree whatever of art or artifice. The young clergyman had not the slightest intention in the world of winning the heart of Lucy Rushton, nor had he any thought that he should lose his own; but he was delighted for the first time in his life to bring into a pleasant and polite publicity the result of his many medita-

tions and his much learning. He now for the first time felt that he had not studied in vain, that his mind was really enlarged, that he had thought justly as well as diligently, amiably as well as profoundly. The listening ear, and the approving voice of one that understands, that appreciates, that is manifestly delighted with the thoughts that are uttered, and the graceful language with which they are clothed, give an impulse to the expression of intellect, and bring into sight treasures of knowledge and mental science, of the extent of which the professor himself was scarcely aware. Never is a young and ambitious student more delighted than when he is astonished at himself, and seems almost to look up to his own wisdom with respect; and, pleased as he is with himself, he is even better pleased with those who make him so. Then, of course, all that is amiable in his disposition and feelings begins to display itself, not with any conscious ostentation, but with a pleasant simplicity of unguarded impulse; his goodness of heart is not studiously protruded to catch applause, but seems rather betrayed than exhibited; the lead that is cast into the depths of his mind to bring up the soundings of wisdom, has also cleaving to it the pearls of moral beauty. And the pleased listener, especially if a gentle young female, mentally exclaims, "What treasures of wisdom and goodness that heart possesses!" — For, if by the rudeness of contradiction and the obstinacy of opposition, the mind of the wise man is provoked into the folly of anger, heat, and a loud intemperance of speech, — by a parity of principle, when its aphorisms are received with respectful attention, and when its oracles are listened to as the voice of truth modulated by the music of beauty, then all that is amiable in the heart must involuntarily show itself. So, step by step, when there is no suspicion, and no intention on either side, an exchange of hearts is made. While Henry Calvert was discoursing with a deep and earnest eloquence, blending in his conversation philosophical analysis with christian faith and human kindness, though he addressed himself more to the elder than to the younger lady, and though Lucy said but little, yet her pretty eyes were bright with a liquid splendour, which any slight touch of pathos might have condensed into an actual tear; her pleased lips stood tremblingly apart, telling of a rapturous approbation which was too deep for words. At the living light of that countenance, at the applause which gleamed in its every movement, the young speaker grew more eloquent and more impressive.

Lady Sarah Kennett, while listening with delight to the animated and intelligent talk of the young divine, had not the remotest idea that her granddaughter had any other interest in the conversation than in its truth and wisdom. The careful grandmother would not, on any account, have suffered these two young persons to pass an hour together, with no other company than their own; but she very readily and unsuspectingly gave opportunity to the parties to recommend themselves to each other, far more effectually than they could or would have done by any rambling and strolling together in groves and lawns. Lovers do not become such by having no other society than their own; but when they have selected each other from the herd, it is then that they love to be by themselves: more hearts are lost and won in society than in retirement. In the hours of solitude there is a recollection of what has passed in society; for while society obliterates the thoughts of solitude, solitude corroborates the impressions of society. Young ladies do not go to balls to realize their dreams; but they often go home and dream of what they have seen at a ball. And so far as the fascinations of a cultivated mind and an amiable disposition are of force to gain a female heart, these are never so effectually displayed as in conversation where the listeners are many, and where looks of approbation are abounding. The mind as well as the body is dressed for company; it chooses its best thoughts, it exhibits them to the best advantage, it conceals

all that might tell against it, and it sets forth all that there is recommendatory about it. Generally speaking, also, there is seldom much love where there is no pride in the object loved; and when a young and susceptible mind sees others admire what it admires, then is its admiration increased, and in a female heart admiration is often the bud to love's blossom.

An impression had now been made on the heart of Lucy Rushton, of the nature of which she was herself quite unconscious and unsuspecting. Ten thousand pretty and pleasant thoughts were starting up, and dancing on the surface of her soul, like the bubbles which a sunlit summer shower makes on the bosom of a gentle stream. When she retired to rest that night, she had no weariness on her eyelids, and no inclination for sleep; but what it was that kept her awake she knew not, nor did she care to enquire, for she was very happy, and had no wish to destroy her happiness by any attempt to analyse it. She was pleased with the world, and with all that it contained; she felt that all things were governed and guided by an unerring wisdom. Through the casement of her apartment, she looked out upon a scene as beautiful as moon, and stars, light clouds, and graceful vegetation could make. She thought it a pity to close the eye in sleep, when there was so much loveliness of heaven and earth to gaze upon. The night-wind sighed among the old trees in the park, and as they bent their broad branches to the passing breeze, they seemed instinct with consciousness and life. There shone in the light of the moon the spire of the village church, and it called to her memory the not far distant church in which her father had laboured with a pious and successful zeal. Tears sprang up as she thought of her departed parents, but those tears were so delightful that she felt as if religion sanctified and Heaven approved of them. She thought of those cottages in which she had once been a welcome visitor, where her lips had spoken consolation, and her hands had brought relief. She thought of the aged whom she had left upon the brink of the grave, and to whom her dear father had administered those words of everlasting truth which should be their guide through the dark valley of the shadow of death. Thus, much of the time usually devoted to rest passed away in a delirium of tearful joy and pleasant meditation, in which the mind roved bee-like from thought to thought, and found something sweet in each. Henry Calvert, in the philosophic and eloquent talk of the preceding day, had spoken much and powerfully in illustration of the goodness of the Deity, bringing new illustrations with a truth as striking as their novelty; and in the recollection of these illustrations, Lucy felt a delight so pure, and so pious, that she thought that never before had the true principle of religion taken so firm a hold on her mind.

Lady Sarah Kennett was subject in no small degree to that infirmity which so frequently attacks clever people; she was highly susceptible of flattery, especially from persons whom she considered to possess understanding. Common praise from common-place people she affected altogether to despise, desiring only the intellectual homage of the intellectually powerful and distinguished; not perhaps considering that praise is most readily and most liberally bestowed by the best and most accomplished minds; for it requires a very inferior degree of mental capacity to find faults, but it is the privilege of the highest to discover beauties. Mr. Calvert had pleased Lady Sarah's vanity; he had, without saying a word of personal or direct compliment, addressed conversation to her of such a nature and in such a style as evidently gave her credit for possessing a mind of superior order. She was highly grateful for the compliment; and in order to show her gratitude she resolved to do Mr. Calvert the honour of going to his church to hear him preach. The distance was three miles, the day was splendidly fine: Lucy and her grandmother went in an open carriage. Mr. Calvert preached as he had talked: his discourse was the result of deep

thought and of right feeling; he did not drag his hearers down to the bewildering depths of an unprofitable profundity, but he brought up for them, and made manifest to them those truths which they could reach and appreciate when brought to the surface, but which they might not have discovered for themselves.

Before the service was over the beauty of the day had departed; 'a little cloud like a man's hand' had raised up its rapidly growing strength from the western horizon, and had spread its dewy curtain over the face of the sky, and was now pouring its liquid treasures in rich profusion on the well pleased earth. When Lucy arrived at the church porch, holding her grandmother's arm, and saw the door of the parsonage-house not many paces from where she stood, and perceived that the rain was not likely soon to abate, her heart bounced and throbbed like a pet lamb bounding to free itself from the silken thread in which its tender mistress holds it. Her lovely countenance displayed a pretty confusion as she looked at Lady Sarah Kennett as much as to say, "What a pleasant pity it is that we must take shelter at the parsonage." With such a heavy shower of rain as this there certainly ought by rights to have been some forked lightning and pealing thunder, in order that Lucy might have fainted away, — in order that Mr. Calvert might have carried her into the house in his arms, — in order that in the confusion their lips or cheeks might have met, — in order that Lucy might have blushed when she recovered from her swoon — in order that they might have vowed eternal fidelity, and all that sort of thing. But there was neither lightning nor thunder, nor anything more terrible than a heavy rain, which was as welcome to Lucy's heart as it was to the parched ground and the thirsty trees.

Mr. Calvert made himself quite as agreeable in his own house as he had been at Kennett Hall; he was eloquent with the same eloquence, not indeed with the repetition of the same thoughts, but with the same kind of sincere, deep-searching, and truly religious philosophy that finds good and the truth in all things. So pleased was Lady Sarah with the young divine, that she forgot the proud disdain with which she had been formerly accustomed to look down upon his predecessor, her son-in-law, and she now indulged and gratified Lucy by speaking of her father; and then the young lady made anxious enquiries concerning the poor people of the village, and she was pleased when she found that though they had lost one friend and benefactor, yet God in his good providence had raised them up another equally kind to relieve, and equally faithful to instruct them. It is a truly astonishing thing, and altogether unaccountable, yet so it is, that notwithstanding Lady Sarah Kennett was herself almost in love with Mr. Calvert, yet she never had the slightest suspicion that her grand-daughter might also be captivated with the charms of his conversation and the amiable qualities of his mind. And though she was pleased to think that the new vicar was pleased with herself, yet it never entered her mind that he might be quite as much pleased with her grand-daughter, and perhaps rather more; for, in the eyes of a young man, youth and beauty are a very pleasant addition and a very strong recommendation to female intellect. Much there is that passes before our eyes that we never see, because we never suspect it. Eyes are very useful things withal, but they do not amount to much unless there be a proper head to use them. Lady Sarah Kennett had not the remotest idea that all the eloquent truths that were spoken to her, were spoken for her grand-daughter; her ladyship was not aware how much she was indebted for Mr. Calvert's amiable sagacity to Lucy's lovely looks and sweetly approving eyes.

The rain abated and the evening was fine; Lucy and her grandmother returned to the hall, admiring the improved appearance of the earth after the shower; and Lucy felt that the visit which she had paid to the home of her early youth, had been as refreshing as the rain to the dry ground. After

this, Mr. Calvert called at the hall to enquire how the ladies got home. The probability was that they got home safely enough, and pleasantly too, for they had a very good carriage, steady horses, a sober coachman, admirable roads, a fine evening, plenty of time, and only three miles to travel. But Lady Sarah Kennett received the vicar so courteously that he could not but soon call again; and, upon every repetition of his visit, his company seemed more and more agreeable.

Mr. Calvert was delighted to find himself on such good terms at the hall, and he never paid a visit there without discerning new beauties in the mind of Lucy Rushton. Long, very long after her heart was wholly his, he was taking great pains to win it, doing, saying and looking every thing that was amiable. But the worst of the matter was, that he could never find an opportunity of being alone with her. He was sure that his visits to the hall were acceptable to Lady Sarah Kennett, who was both master and mistress, without any right to be either the one or the other; and he began also to think that he was not altogether unwelcome in the sight of Lucy. More than once he meditated to speak on the topic which most deeply interested him to Lady Sarah herself, but there was an equal difficulty in finding an opportunity to speak to her alone; for the grand-mother and the grand-daughter seemed inseparable when he was at the hall. The two ladies so liked his company that they were resolved to have as much of it as they possibly could: this was highly flattering, but it was also deeply perplexing. To speak to Sir William Kennett would have amounted to as much as speaking to the butler; for the worthy baronet was as nobody in his own house, and was well content to leave the administration of affairs in the hands which so long had held the reins. There was therefore no other alternative than writing. Writing is not the best mode of making love; but when no other mode can be found there is no help for it.

When the present Sir William Kennet was a child, it was thought advisable by his most vigilant and clever mother, that he should read nothing either printed or written, but that which had previously received her special licence and approbation; hence it came to pass, that all letters addressed to the young gentleman, were perused by the mother, before they were entrusted to the hands of her son. Through the indolence of the baronet, and the adhesiveness with which the dowager clung to every manifestation of power; this practice still continued; and the servants in the establishment were always in the habit of carrying all letters first to Lady Sarah, through whose hands they reached their ultimate destination, opened, or unopened, as her curiosity prompted, or indifference withheld her. A letter being delivered into the hands of her ladyship, for Miss Lucy Rushton, was an excitement of curiosity too strong to be resisted. The letter was opened; it was perused with avidity, and astonishment, — with anger, and almost with a deeper feeling still; — the dowager trembled exceedingly when she felt, as she certainly did, though she affected to deny it to herself, that she was actually jealous of her grand-daughter. On what ground, and with what justice Lady Sarah Kennet could be angry with her grand-daughter, because a young gentleman of good understanding and amiable disposition had thought proper to make her an offer of his hand, it is impossible for us to say. There was nothing in the letter which at all implicated the young lady, as having given any encouragement to the suitor; but all was modest, diffident, humble, and tremulously respectful. He laid his heart and fortune at her feet, though that did not amount to much — for his fortune was small, and his heart was not his own. But it was a love-letter, — and in the eyes of the aged it is always an unpardonable sin for young persons to write or to receive love-letters.

Now, it seemed necessary that Lady Sarah should proceed, in most grand-motherly magnificence and judicial pomp of manner, to summon

before her the wicked culprit, and pass sentence of condemnation on the criminal, who had been guilty of the high offence of having a letter written to her by a gentleman. Passing therefore into her own dressing-room, with as much stateliness and loftiness of bearing as if the mace-bearer and the sword-bearer preceded her, and the train-bearer followed her, Lady Sarah Kennet rang her bell twice for her own maid, to whom, with due solemnity, she gave it in charge to tell Miss Rushton's maid to inform Miss Rushton that her presence was immediately required in her ladyship's dressing-room. All this was done ; and Lucy, light of heart, calm as purity, and cheerful as innocence, presented herself to her grandmother, wondering what could be the mighty matter. The cheerfulness of her spirit, however, suddenly abated, and the lightness of her innocent looks was exchanged for a blank astonishment, when she saw upon her grandmother's brow a gathering cloud of thunder,—her lips compressed, the corners of her mouth drawn down, as she sat in awful state, waiting the approach of the young transgressor. Lucy paused for a moment, as she entered the room, as if afraid of the wrath which was but too manifest in the expression of her ladyship's countenance.

"Come hither child!" said Lady Sarah, in a most terrible tone of voice.

Lucy was then as much afraid to remain at a distance, as she had before been to approach her venerable grandmother. With prompt obedience to the call, the young lady having closed the door of the apartment, drew near with a trembling and uncertain apprehension ; and holding down her head, as if afraid to meet the angry gaze of her stern and haughty kinswoman, she saw in her ladyship's hand a letter, the superscription of which bore the name of Miss Rushton. The letter was open :—Now, there are some young ladies of twenty years of age, or thereabouts, who would not patiently endure to have letters which had been addressed to themselves opened by their grandmothers ; but Lucy Rushton was not one of these ; she had known but two positions, in neither of which she had been led, or tempted to the sin of resistance :—under her father's roof, and under his dominion, there was no command that she wished to disobey ; love held her in obedience ;—under her grandmother's roof, there was no command that she dared to disobey ; fear held her in obedience :—so, under the opposite influences of love and fear, she had been altogether withheld from the struggles of resistance. We cannot account for the fact, but we know that it is so,—that certain very clever and managing persons, who have the care of young persons committed to their charge, are in the habit of behaving towards them much after the manner in which a cat behaves to a mouse. For, when a cat catches a mouse with an intention of killing and eating it, she does not immediately and directly proceed to the work of murder and mastication, but she keeps the poor creature for a while in miserable suspense, tossing, and tumbling, and mumbling it about ; so these clever folks, when they are fortunate enough to catch a young person in any fault or transgression, do not in a straight-forward way proceed to reprove the offender, and to remedy the offence, but they bother, and bepreachify, lecture, prose, prate, talk, and mystify, till the poor victim writhes with impatience, and almost faints with mere vexation. After this manner did Lady Sarah lecture her grand-daughter. Lucy saw a letter addressed to herself ; but who had written it, what it contained, or why it made her grandmother look so awful, she could not possibly divine ;—but because her ladyship looked very angry, therefore the grand-daughter looked humble. Lady Sarah began her lecture, by speaking of the duty which children owed to their parents and guardians ; she then proceeded to speak of the great decorum of all the Kennet family ; how, when young, they had submitted themselves to be guided by their parents and their elders ; how that the present Sir William Kennet never thought of having a will of his own,

in opposition to the will of his mother; how that every successive generation grew worse and worse; how that the young people of the present day seemed disposed to turn the world upside down; how that young ladies, especially, forgetful of the modesty and retiring diffidence which had graced the spinsterhood of their grandmothers, instead of repelling the addresses of the other sex, rather encouraged and invited them. Then followed a great deal of talk about the gravity that became the daughter of a clergyman, interspersed with conjectures as to what might have been the system of moral discipline pursued by Lucy's father. At the mention of her father's name, her heart swelled as if it would burst, and she wept copiously; — at sight of these tears, the old lady became more eloquent, and more didactic; and Lucy continued sobbing, and was unable to speak; though she very much wished to know what was the meaning of all this, for at present all was wrapped in profound mystery.

In the art of ingeniously tormenting, care must be always taken that, when the patient has been softened into tears, the irritation be not carried on so long that the tears become dried up, and hardened into cold indifference, or warmed into an angry resistance. Lady Sarah Kennett had one to deal with, who could certainly bear a great deal, but there is a limit beyond which patience itself cannot go. Aware of this, her ladyship thought it now advisable to come more directly to the heavy charge which she had to bring against her grand-daughter. Presenting therefore to her the superscription of the letter, she said, "Do you know whose hand-writing is this?"

"No, madam," was the sobbing reply.

"And I suppose," rejoined the grandmother, "that you cannot conjecture whose it is?"

"Indeed I cannot;" said Lucy.

One of the most frequently inculcated maxims, which Lucy had heard from the lips of her beloved father, was the value and importance of a strict and hearty adherence to truth. Now, just at this moment it occurred to her, though she could scarcely tell why, but it certainly did come into her mind, that it was possible that the letter might have been written by Mr. Calvert; and the moment that she had this suspicion, she felt that it was a duty which she owed to the majesty of truth to confess even her suspicions; therefore she said with a little hesitation, — with that slowness of utterance which seems to indicate an almost improbable theory, — "unless it be from Mr. Calvert."

At hearing this, the countenance of Lady Sarah Kennett exhibited a change by no means for the better; the redness of indignation was added to the ruggedness of anger, and suddenly, she exclaimed, "From Mr. Calvert! From Mr. Calvert! What right had you to expect a letter from Mr. Calvert?"

"I have no right to expect any letter from Mr. Calvert," replied Lucy; "but you asked me if I could conjecture from whom it came, and I know of no one else at all likely to write to me, and I am sure I cannot imagine what Mr. Calvert should have to write to me about."

"Pray Miss Rushton," said Lady Sarah, almost angry with herself for the indignation which she had betrayed, "may I make bold to ask what encouragement you have given Mr. Calvert to address to you a letter of this kind? I am sure that he never would have written such a letter, had he not known that it would meet with a welcome reception."

Now, Lucy understood the subject of the letter perfectly well, and she was covered with blushes, and was tremulous with a mighty confusion, so that for a while she could not speak; but when she had recovered her self-possession, she replied, — "I am not conscious of having given Mr. Calvert any encouragement whatever. Indeed, I never saw or spoke to him but in your ladyship's presence."

Her ladyship was then somewhat angry again, and rather tartly replied, "Yes, yes, — I believe I was rather in the way; this letter seems to intimate as much. I spoiled your pleasant meetings by my unwelcome company."

"Nay, madam," answered Lucy, "I considered Mr. Calvert's visits paid to you, and not to me."

"So did I," said Lady Sarah, somewhat sharply.

"I thought that it was for the pleasure of your ladyship's conversation," continued Lucy, "that Mr. Calvert made his calls so frequent."

"So did I," again her ladyship replied; "and you also seemed to enjoy the pleasure of his conversation; for you were never absent when he was here."

With much simplicity of heart and purity of thought, Lucy replied, "I am sure that I would have withdrawn had I thought my presence an intrusion."

Her ladyship started, and said, "What?" — There was no disguising the matter from herself; it was as clear as light that Lady Sarah Kennett was jealous of her grand-daughter; but fortunately for her ladyship's peace of mind, she found that her secret was her own, and she discovered it just in time to keep it so. She struggled with herself for a few minutes; then rising from her seat, she put the letter into her grand-daughter's hands, saying in a very altered tone, — "Take the letter, my dear, and answer it."

"How shall I answer it?" said Lucy in a sweet confusion.

"Answer it as you think it ought to be answered," said her grandmother. "Mr. Calvert is an amiable and a worthy man."

Lucy took the letter and answered it; but neither letter nor answer shall be given here, lest they should find their way into the polite letter-writer; for they were both much superior in style to those which appear in that work on the same topic. Suffice it to say, that the letter was so answered, that, after the lapse of a few months, it was absolutely impossible for Mr. Calvert to marry Lady Sarah Kennett, seeing that, by Scripture and our law, a man may not marry his wife's grandmother.

THE

LAST DAYS OF POMPEII.

BY THE AUTHOR OF

"PELHAM," "EUGENE ARAM," "ENGLAND AND THE ENGLISH,"
"DEVEREUX," ETC.

"Such is Vesuvius ! and these things take place in it every year. But all eruptions which have happened since would be trifling, even if all summed into one, compared to what occurred at the period we refer to * * * * *

"Day was turned into night, and night into darkness — an inexpressible quantity of dust and ashes was poured out, deluging land, sea, and air, and burying two entire cities, Herculaneum and Pompeii, while the people were sitting in the theatre."

DION. CASSIUS, lib. lxxvi.

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DEDICATION

TO SIR WILLIAM GELL,

&c. &c.

DEAR SIR,

In publishing a work of which Pompeii furnishes the subject, I can think of no one to whom it can so fitly be dedicated as yourself. Your charming volumes upon the Antiquities of that city have indissolubly connected your name with its earlier—(as your residence in the vicinity has identified you with its more recent)—associations.

I trust that these pages will find you in better health than when we parted at Naples, and that, whatever example your friends may derive from your philosophy, may be drawn from an industry in intellectual acquisitions never to be wearied, rather than from a patience under suffering never to be excelled.

Ere you receive these volumes, I hope to be deep in the perusal of your forthcoming work upon "the Topography of Rome and its Vicinity." The glance at its contents which you permitted me at Naples, sufficed to convince me of its interest and value; and as an Englishman, and as one "who has loitered under the portico," I rejoice to think, that in adding largely to your own reputation, you will also renovate our country's claim to eminence in those departments of learning in which, of late years, we have but feebly supported our ancient reputation. Venturing thus a prediction of the success of your work, it would be a little superfluous to express a wish for the accomplishment of the prophecy! But I may add a more general hope, that you will long have leisure and inclination for those literary pursuits, to which you bring an erudition so extensive, and that they may continue, as now, sometimes to beguile you from yourself, and never to divert you from your friends.

I have the honour to be,

Dear sir,

Very faithfully yours,

THE AUTHOR.

Leamington, September 21, 1834.

PREFACE

TO

THE LAST DAYS OF POMPEII.

OW visiting those disinterred remains of an ancient city, which, more perhaps than either the delicious breeze or the cloudless sun, the violet valleys and orange groves of the south, attract the traveller to the neighbourhood of Naples; on viewing, still fresh and vivid, the houses, the streets, the temples, the theatres of a place existing in the haughtiest age of the Roman Empire, — it was not unnatural, perhaps, that a writer who had before laboured, however unworthily, in the art to revive and to create, should feel a keen desire to people once more those deserted streets, to repair those graceful ruins, to reanimate the bones which were yet spared to his survey; to traverse the gulf of eighteen centuries, and to wake to a second existence — the City of the Dead!

And the reader will easily imagine how sensibly this desire grew upon one, who felt he could perform his undertaking, with Pompeii itself at the distance of a few miles — the sea that once bore her commerce, and received her fugitives, at his feet — and the fatal mountain of Vesuvius, still breathing forth smoke and fire, constantly before his eyes!*

I was aware, however, from the first, of the great difficulties with which I had to contend. To paint the manners and exhibit the life of the middle ages, required the hand of a master genius; yet, perhaps, the task is slight and easy, in comparison with that which aspires to portray a far earlier and more unfamiliar period. With the men and customs of the feudal time, we have a natural sympathy and bond of alliance; those men were our own ancestors — from those customs we received our own — the creed of our chivalric fathers is still ours — their tombs yet consecrate our churches — the ruins of their castles yet frown over our valleys. We trace in their struggles for liberty and for justice our present institutions; and in the elements of their social state, we behold the origin of our own.

But, with the classical age, we have no household and familiar associations. The creed of that departed religion, the customs of that past civilization, present little that is sacred or attractive to our northern imagination: they are rendered yet more trite to us by the scholastic pedantries which first acquainted us with their nature, and are linked with their recollection of studies, which, imposed as a labour, were not cultivated as a delight.

* Yet the task, though arduous, seemed to me worth attempting; and in the time and the scene I have chosen, much may be found to arouse the curiosity of the reader, and enlist his interest in the descriptions of the author. It was the first century of our religion — it was the most civilized period of Rome — the conduct of the story lies amid places whose relics

* Nearly the whole of this work was written the winter before last at Naples. On my return to England I was, indeed, too much occupied with political matters to have a great deal of superfluous leisure for works, purely literary, except in those, not unwelcome, intervals when the parliament going to sleep allows the objects of life to awake; — dismissing its wearied legislators, some to hunt, some to shoot — some to fatten or — and some to cultivate literature.

we yet trace — the catastrophe is among the most awful which the tragedies of ancient history present to our survey.

From the ample materials before me, my endeavour has been to select those which would be most attractive to a modern reader; — the customs and superstitions least unfamiliar to him — the shadows that, when reanimated, would present to him such images as, while they represented the past, might be least uninteresting to the speculations of the present. It did, indeed, require a greater self-control than the reader may at first imagine, to reject much that was most inviting in itself; but which, while it might have added attraction to parts of the work, would have been injurious to the symmetry of the whole. Thus, for instance, the date of my story is that of the short reign of Titus, when Rome was at its proudest and most gigantic eminence of unbridled luxury and unrivalled power. It was, therefore, a most inviting temptation to the author to conduct the characters of his tale, during the progress of its incidents, from Pompeii to Rome. What could afford such materials for description, or such field for the vanity of display, as that gorgeous city of the world, whose grandeur could lend so bright an inspiration to fancy, — so favourable and so solemn a dignity to research. But in choosing for my subject — my catastrophe, *The Destruction of Pompeii*, it required but little insight into the higher principles of art to perceive that to Pompeii the story should be rigidly confined.

Placed in contrast with the mighty pomp of Rome, the luxuries and gaud of the vivid Campanian city would have sunk into insignificance. Her awful fate would have seemed but a petty and isolated wreck in the vast seas of the imperial sway; and the auxiliary I should have summoned to the interest of my story, would only have destroyed and overpowered the cause it was invoked to support. I was therefore compelled to relinquish an episodic excursion so alluring in itself, and, confining my story strictly to Pompeii, to leave to others the honour of delineating the hollow but majestic civilization of Rome.

The city, whose fate supplied me with so superb and awful a catastrophe, supplied easily from the first survey of its remains the characters most suited to the subject and the scene; the half Grecian colony of Hercules, mingling with the manners of Italy so much of the costumes of Hellas, suggested of itself the characters of Glaucus and Ione! The worship of Isis, its existent fane, with its false oracles unveiled; the trade of Pompeii with Alexandria; the associations of the Sarnus with the Nile, called forth the Egyptian Arbaces — the base Calenus — and the fervent Apæcides. The early struggles of Christianity with the heathen superstition suggested the creation of Olinthus; and the burnt fields of Campania, long celebrated for the spells of the Sorceress, naturally produced the Saga of Vesuvius. For the existence of the Blind Girl I am indebted to a casual conversation with a gentleman, well known among the English at Naples for his general knowledge of the many paths of life. Speaking of the utter darkness which accompanied the first recorded eruption of Vesuvius, and the additional obstacle it presented to the escape of the inhabitants, he observed, that the blind would be the most favoured in such a moment, and find the easiest deliverance. This remark originated the creation of Nydia.

The characters, therefore, are the natural offspring of the scene and time — the incidents of the tale are equally consonant, perhaps, to the then existent society; for it is not only the ordinary habits of life, the feasts and the forum, the baths and the amphitheatre, the commonplace routine of the classic luxury, which we recall the past to behold; equally important and more deeply interesting are the passions, the crimes, the misfortunes, and reverses that might have chanced to the shades we thus summon to life. We understand any epoch of the world but ill, if we do not examine its romance; — there is as much truth in the poetry of life as in its prose.

As the greatest difficulty in treating of an unfamiliar and distant period is to make the characters introduced, "live and move" before the eye of the reader, so such should doubtless be the first object of a work of the present description: and all attempts at the display of learning should be considered but as means subservient to this, the main requisite of fiction. The first art of the poet (the creator) is to breathe the breath of life into his creatures — the next is to make their words and actions appropriate to the era in which they are to speak and act. This last art is perhaps the better effected by not bringing the art itself constantly before the reader — by not crowding the page with quotations, and the margin with notes. Perpetual references to learned authorities have, in fiction, something at once wearisome and arrogant. They appear like the author's eulogies on his own accuracy and his own learning — they do not serve to elucidate his meaning, but to parade his erudition. The intuitive spirit which infuses antiquity into ancient images is, perhaps, the true learning which a work of this nature requires — without it, pedantry is offensive; with it, useless. No man who is thoroughly aware of what prose fiction has now become, of its dignity — of its influence — of the manner in which it has gradually absorbed all similar departments of literature — of its power in teaching as well as amusing — can so far forget its connexion with history — with philosophy — with politics — its utter harmony with poetry, and obediency to truth, as to debase its nature to the level of scholastic frivolities: he raises scholarship to the creative, and does not bow the creative to the scholastic.

With respect to the language used by the characters introduced, I have studied carefully to avoid what has always seemed to me a fatal error in those who have attempted, in modern times, to introduce the beings of a classical age.* Authors have mostly given to them the stilted sentences — the cold and didactic solemnities of language which they find in the more admired of the classical writers; it is an error as absurd to make Romans in common life talk in the periods of Cicero, as it would be in a novelist to endow his English personages with the long-drawn sentences of Johnson or Burke. The fault is the greater, because, while it pretends to learning, it betrays in reality the ignorance of just criticism — it fatigues — it wearies — it revolts — and we have not the satisfaction in yawning to think that we yawn eruditely. To impart any thing like fidelity to the dialogues of classic actors, we must beware (to use a university phrase) how we "cram" for the occasion! — Nothing can give to a writer a more stiff

* What the strong common sense of Sir Walter Scott has expressed so well in his preface to *Ivanhoe*, (first edition,) appears to me, at least, as applicable to one, a writer who draws from classical, — as to one who borrows from feudal — antiquity. Let me avail myself of the words I refer to, and humbly and reverently appropriate them for the moment. "It is true, that I neither can, nor do pretend, to the observation (observance?) of complete accuracy even in matters of outward costume, much less in the more important points of language and manners. But the same motive which prevents my writing the dialogue of the piece in Anglo-Saxon or in Norman French (*in Latin or in Greek*), and which prohibits my sending forth this essay printed with the types of Caxton or Wynken de Worde (*written with a reed upon five rolls of parchment — fastened to a cylinder, and adorned with a boss*), prevents my attempting to confine myself within the limits of the period in which my story is laid. It is necessary for exciting interest of any kind, that the subject assumed should be, as it were, translated into the manners as well as the language of the age we live in."

"In point of justice, therefore, to the multitudes who will, I trust, devour this book with avidity (*hem!*), I have so far explained ancient manners in modern language, and so far detailed the characters and sentiments of my persons, that the modern reader will not find himself, I should hope, much trammelled by the repulsive dryness of mere antiquity. In this, I respectfully contend, I have in no respect exceeded the fair license due to the author of a fictitious composition."

"It is true," proceeds my authority, "that this license is confined within legitimate bounds; the author must introduce nothing inconsistent with the manners of the age." — *Preface to Ivanhoe.*

I can add nothing to these judicious and discriminating remarks — they form the true canons of criticism, by which all fiction that portrays the Past should be judged.

and uneasy gait than the sudden and hasty adoption of the toga. We must bring to our task the familiarized knowledge of many years — the allusions, the phraseology — the language generally — must flow from a stream that has long been full; the flowers must be transplanted from a living soil, and not bought second-hand at the nearest market-place. This advantage, which is in fact only that of familiarity with our subject, is one derived rather from accident than merit, — and depends upon the degrees in which the classics have entered into the education of our youth and the studies of our maturity. Yet even did a writer possess the utmost advantage of this nature, which education and study can bestow, it might be scarcely possible so entirely to transport himself to an age so different from that in which we live, but what some errors of inadvertence or forgetfulness would be incurred in his delineations — and, when in works upon the manners of the ancients — works even of the gravest and most elaborate character, composed by the profoundest scholars, a critic superficially read can often detect such imperfections, — it would be far too presumptuous to hope that I have been more fortunate than men infinitely more learned, in a work in which learning is infinitely less required. It is for this reason that I venture to believe that scholars themselves will be the most lenient of my judges. It will be enough if this book, whatever be its imperfections, should be found a portrait unskilful indeed in colouring — faulty perhaps in drawing, but not altogether an unfaithful likeness of the features and the costumes of the age which I have attempted to paint: — may it be (what is far more important) a just representation of the human passions and the human heart, whose elements in all ages are the same. And lastly, let me be permitted to remind the reader, that if I have succeeded in giving some interest and vitality to a description of classic manners and to a tale of a classic age, I have succeeded where all hitherto have failed: * — a necessary corollary from the proposition, is one equally consolatory, though less triumphant, viz., if I have failed in the attempt, I fail where no one has succeeded. After this sentence, I can but conclude at once. Can I say any thing more effectually to prove that an author never shows half so much ingenuity as in making out the best possible case for his own performance?

* I must be pardoned for not excepting *Barthelemy*. His *Anacharsis* is a work of wonderful ability, labour, elegance, and research. But there is no life in it! It does not, to be sure, profess to be actually a romance, but even as a book of travels it is formal and tedious. The external erudition is abundant, but the inward spirit is wanting. He has not been exhilarated by the wine of antiquity, but he has accumulated a prodigious quantity of labels. "*Anacharsis*," says Schlegel, well and wittily, "views things in his travels, not as a young Scythian, but as an old Parisian!" Yes, and as a Parisian, who never gives you the notion that he has travelled at all — except in an arm chair!

THE LAST DAYS OF POMPEII.

BOOK I.

Quid sit futurum cras, fuge querere ;
Quem sors dierum cunque dabit, lucro
Appone ; nec dulces amores
Sperne puer, neque tu choreas.

HOR. lib. I. Od. ix.

CHAPTER I.

THE TWO GENTLEMEN OF POMPEII.

"Ho, Diomed, well met—do you sup with Glaucus to-night?" said a young man of small stature, who wore his tunic in those loose and effeminate folds which proved him to be a gentleman and a coxcomb.

"Alas, no! dear Clodius; he has not invited me," replied Diomed, a man of a portly frame and of middle age: "by Pollux, a scurvy trick! for they say his suppers are the best in Pompeii."

"Pretty well—though there is never enough of wine for me. It is not the old Greek blood that flows in his veins, for he pretends that wine makes him dull the next morning."

"There may be another reason for that thrift," said Diomed, raising his brows; "with all his conceit and extravagance, he is not so rich, I fancy, as he affects to be, and perhaps loves to save his amphoræ better than his wit."

"An additional reason for supping with him while the *sestercies* last. Next year, Diomed, we must find another Glaucus."

"He is fond of the dice too, I hear."

"He is fond of every pleasure, and while he likes the pleasure of giving suppers, we are all fond of him."

"Ha, ha, Clodius, that is well said. Have you ever seen my wine-cellars, by-the-by?"

"I think not, my good Diomed."

"Well, you must sup with me some evening; I have tolerable *muræne** in my reservoir, and I will ask Pansa the edile to meet you."

"Oh, no state with me!—*Persicos odi apparatus*, I am easily contented. Well, the day wanes; I am for the baths—and you?"

"To the questor—business of state—afterward to the temple of *Isis Vale!*"

"An ostentatious, bustling, ill-bred fellow," muttered Clodius to himself, as he sauntered slowly away. "He thinks with his feasts and his wine-cellars to make us forget that he is the son of a freedman; and so we will

* *Muræne*—lampreys.

when we do him the honour of winning his money : these rich plebeians are a harvest for us spendthrift nobles."

Thus soliloquizing, Clodius arrived in the Via Domitiana, which was crowded with passengers and chariots, and exhibited all that gay and animated exuberance of life and motion which we find at this day in the streets of Naples.

The bells of the cars, as they rapidly glided by each other, jingled merrily on the ear, and Clodius with smiles or nods claimed familiar acquaintance with whatever equipage was most elegant or fantastic — in fact, no young man was better known about Pompeii.

"What, Clodius! and how have you slept on your good fortune?" cried, in a pleasant and musical voice, a young man in a chariot of the most fastidious and graceful fashion. Upon its surface of bronze were elaborately wrought, in the still exquisite workmanship of Greece, reliefs of the Olympian Games: the two horses that drew the car were of the rarest breed of Parthia; their slender limbs seemed to disdain the ground and court the air, and yet at the slightest touch of the charioteer, who stood behind the young owner of the equipage, they paused motionless, as if suddenly transformed into stone, — lifeless, but lifelike, as one of the breathing wonders of Praxiteles. The owner himself was of that slender and beautiful symmetry from which the sculptors of Athens drew their models: his Grecian origin betrayed itself in his light but clustering locks, and the perfect harmony of his features. He wore no toga, which in the time of the emperors had indeed ceased to be the general distinction of the Romans, and was especially ridiculed by the pretenders to fashion; but his tunic glowed in the richest hues of the Tyrian dye, and the fibulæ, or buckles, by which it was fastened, sparkled with emeralds: around his neck he wore a chain of gold, which in the middle of his breast twisted itself into the form of a serpent's head, from the mouth of which hung pendant a large signet ring of elaborate and most exquisite workmanship; the sleeves of the tunic were loose, and fringed at the hand with gold; and across the waist a girdle wrought in arabesque designs, and of the same material as the fringe, served in lieu of pockets for the receptacle of the handkerchief and the purse, the stylus and the tablets.

"My dear Glaucus!" said Clodius, "I rejoice to see that your losses have so little affected your mien. Why you seem as if you had been inspired by Apollo, and your face shines with happiness like a glory; any one might take you for the winner and me for the loser."

"And what is there in the loss or gain of those dull pieces of metal that should change our spirit, my Clodius? Per Jove! while, yet young, we can cover our full locks with chaplets — while yet the cithara sounds on unsated ears — while yet the smile of Lydia or of Chlœ flashes over our veins in which the blood runs so swiftly, so long shall we find delight in the sunny air, and make bald Time itself but the treasurer of our joys. You sup with me to-night, you know."

Who ever forgets the invitation of Glaucus!

But which way go you now?"

"Why I thought of visiting the baths, but it wants yet an hour of the usual time."

"Well, I will dismiss my chariot, and go with you. So, so, my Phyllis," stroking the horse nearest to him, which by a low neigh and with backward ears playfully acknowledged the courtesy; "a holyday for you to-day. Is he not handsome, Clodius?"

"Worthy of Phœbus," returned the noble parasite, — "or of Glaucus."

CHAPTER II.

THE BLIND FLOWER-GIRL, AND THE BEAUTY OF FASHION — THE ATHENIAN'S CONFESSION — THE READER'S INTRODUCTION TO ARBACES OF EGYPT.

TALKING lightly on a thousand matters, the two young men sauntered through the streets: they were now in that quarter which was filled with the gayest shops, their open interiors all and each radiant with the gaudy yet harmonious colours of frescoes, inconceivably varied in fancy and design. The sparkling fountains, that at every vista threw upward their grateful spray in the summer air; the crowd of passengers, or rather loiterers, mostly clad in robes of the Tyrian die; the gay groups collected round each more attractive shop; the slaves passing to and fro with buckets of bronze, cast in the most graceful shapes, and borne upon their heads; the country girls stationed at frequent intervals with baskets of blushing fruit, and flowers more alluring to the ancient Italians than to their descendants (with whom indeed, "*latet anguis in herba*," a disease seems lurking in every violet and rose) — (a); the numerous haunts which fulfilled with that idle people the office of cafés and clubs at this day; the shops, where, on shelves of marble, were ranged the vases of wine and oil, and before whose thresholds, seats protected from the sun by a purple awning, inviting the weary to rest and the indolent to lounge — made a scene of such glowing and vivacious excitement as might well give the Athenian spirit of Glaucus an excuse for its susceptibility to joy.

"Talk to me no more of Rome," said he to Clodius. "Pleasure is too stately and ponderous in those mighty walls; even in the precincts of the court — even in the golden house of Nero, and the incipient glories of the palace of Titus, there is a certain dulness of magnificence — the eye aches — the spirit is wearied; besides, my Clodius, we are discontented, when we see the enormous luxury and wealth of others, with the mediocrity of our own state. But here we surrender ourselves easily to pleasure, and we have the brilliancy of luxury without the lassitude of its pomp."

"It was from that feeling that you chose your summer retreat at Pompeii?"

"It was. I prefer it to Baïæ: I grant the charms of the latter, but I love not the pedants who resort there, and who seem to weigh out their pleasures by the drachm."

"Yet you are fond of the learned too; and as for poetry, why your house is literally eloquent with Æschylus and Homer, the epic and the drama."

"Yes, but those Romans who mimic my Athenian ancestors do every thing so heavily. Even in the chase they make their slaves carry Plato with them; and whenever their boar is lost, out they take their books and their papyrus, in order not to lose their time too. When the dancing girls swim before them in all the blandishment of Persian manners, some drone of a freedman, with a face of stone, reads them a section of *Cicero de Officiis*.

(a) "Flowers more alluring to the ancient Italians than to their descendants," &c.

The modern Italians, especially those of the more southern parts of Italy, have a peculiar horror of perfumes; they consider them remarkably unwholesome, and the Roman or Neapolitan lady requests her visitors not to use them. What is very strange, the nostril so susceptible of a perfume is wonderfully obtuse to its reverse. You may literally call Rome "*Sentina Gentium*."

Unskilful pharmacists! pleasure and study are not elements to be thus mixed together — they must be enjoyed separately; the Romans lose both by this pragmatistical affectation of refinement, and prove that they have no souls for either. Oh, my Clodius, how little your countrymen know of the true versatility of a Pericles, of the true witcheries of an Aspasia! — It was but the other day that I paid a visit to Pliny. He was sitting in his summer-house writing, while an unfortunate slave played on the tibia. His nephew (oh! whip me such philosophical coxcombs!) was reading Thucydides' description of the plague, and nodding his conceited little head in time to the music while his lips were repeating all the loathsome details of that terrible delineation. The puppy saw nothing incongruous in learning at the same time a ditty of love and a description of the plague."

"Why, they *are* much the same thing," said Clodius.

"So I told him in excuse for his coxcombry; but my youth stared me rebukingly in the face, without taking the jest, and answered that it was only the insensate ear that the music pleased, whereas the book (the description of the plague, mind you!) elevated the heart. 'Ah!' quoth the fat uncle, wheezing, 'my boy is quite an Athenian, always mixing the *utile* with the *dulci*.' O Minerva, how I laughed in my sleeve! While I was there, they came to tell the boy-sophist that his favourite freedman was just dead of a fever. — 'Inexorable Death!' cried he: 'get me my Horace. How beautifully the sweet poet consoles us for these misfortunes!' Oh! can these men love, my Clodius? Scarcely even with the senses. How rarely a Roman has a heart! — He is but the mechanism of genius — he wants its bones and flesh."

Though Clodius was secretly a little sore at these invectives on his countrymen, he affected to sympathise with his friend, partly because he was by nature a parasite, and partly because it was the fashion among the dissolute young Romans to affect a little contempt for the very birth which, in reality, made them so arrogant; it was the mode to imitate the Greeks, and yet to laugh at their own clumsy imitation.

Thus conversing, their steps were arrested by a crowd gathered round an open space where three streets met; and just where the porticoes of a light and graceful temple threw their shade there stood a young girl, with a flower-basket on her right arm, and a small three-stringed instrument of music in the left hand, to whose low and soft tones she was modulating a wild and half barbaric air. At every pause in the music she gracefully waved her flower-basket round, inviting the loiterers to buy; and many a sesterce was showered into the basket, either in compliment to the music, or in compassion to the songstress — for she was blind.

"It is my poor Thessalian," said Glaucus, stopping; "I have not seen her since my return to Pompeii. Hush! her voice is sweet; let us listen."

THE BLIND FLOWER-GIRL'S SONG.

1.

Buy my flowers—O buy—I pray,
The blind girl comes from afar:
If the earth be as fair as I hear them say,
These Flowers her children are!
Do they her beauty keep?
They are fresh from her lap, I know
For I caught them fast asleep
In her arms an hour ago,
With the air which is her breath—
Her soft and delicate breath—
Over them murmuring low!—

On their lips her sweet kiss lingers yet,
 And their cheeks with her tender tears are wet.
 For she weeps—that gentle mother weeps
 (As morn and night her watch she keeps,
 With a yearning heart and a passionate care,)
 To see the young things grow so fair:—
 She weeps—for love she weeps—
 And the dew is the tears she weeps
 From the well of a mother's love!

2.

Ye have a world of light,
 Where love in the lov'd rejoices;
 But the Blind Girl's home is the House of Night,
 And its Beings are empty voices.

As one in the Realm below,
 I stand by the streams of wo;
 I hear the vain shadows glide,
 I feel their soft breath at my side,
 And I thirst the lov'd forms to see,
 And I stretch my fond arms around,
 And I catch but a shapeless sound,
 For the Living are Ghosts to me.

Come buy—come buy!—
 Hark! how the sweet things sigh,
 (For they have a voice like ours,)
 "The breath of the Blind Girl closes
 The leaves of the saddening roses—
 We are tender, we sons of Light,
 We shrink from this child of Night;
 From the grasp of the Blind Girl free us;
 We yearn for the eyes that see us—
 We are for Night too gay,
 In your eyes we behold the day—
 O buy—O buy the Flowers!"

"I must have yon bunch of violets, sweet Nydia," said Glaucus, pressing through the crowd, and dropping a handful of small coins into the basket; "your voice is more charming than ever."

The blind girl started forward as she heard the Athenian's voice—then as suddenly paused, while the blood rushed violently over neck, cheek, and temples.

"So you are returned!" said she in a low voice; and then repeated, half to herself, "Glaucus is returned!"

"Yes, child, I have not been at Pompeii above a few days. My garden wants your care as before—you will visit it, I trust, to-morrow. And mind, no garlands at my house shall be woven by any hands but those of the pretty Nydia."

Nydia smiled joyously, but did not answer; and Glaucus, placing the violets he had selected in his breast, turned gayly and carelessly from the crowd.

"So, she is a sort of client of yours, this child," said Clodius.

"Ay—does she not sing prettily? She interests me, the poor slave!—besides, she is from the land of the god's hill—Olympus frowned upon her cradle—she is of Thessaly."

"The witches' country."

"True; but for my part I find every woman a witch; and at Pompeii, by Venus! the very air seems to have taken a love filter, so handsome does every face without a beard seem in my eyes."

"And lo! one of the handsomest in Pompeii, old Diomed's daughter, the rich Julia," said Clodius, as a young lady, her face covered by her veil, and attended by two female slaves, approached them in her way to the baths.

"Fair Julia, we salute thee," said Clodius.

Julia partially raised her veil, so as with some coquetry to display a bold Roman profile, a full dark bright eye, and a cheek over whose natural olive art shed a fairer and softer rose.

"And Glaucus, too, is returned!" said she, glancing meaningly at the Athenian. "Has he forgotten," she added in a half-whisper, "his friends of the last year?"

"Beautiful Julia! even Lethe itself, if it disappear in one part of the earth, rises again in another. Jupiter does not allow us ever to forget for more than a moment; but Venus, more harsh still, vouchsafes not even a moment's oblivion."

"Glaucus is never at a loss for fair words."

"Who is, when the object of them is so fair?"

"We shall see you both at my father's villa soon?" said Julia, turning to Clodius.

"We will mark the day in which we visit you with a white stone," answered the gamester.

Julia dropped her veil, but slowly, so that her last glance rested on the Athenian with affected timidity and real boldness; the glance bespoke tenderness and reproach.

The friends passed on.

"Julia is certainly handsome," said Glaucus.

"And last year you would have made that confession in a warmer tone."

"True: I was dazzled at the first sight, and mistook for a gem that which was but an artful imitation."

"Nay," returned Clodius, "all women are the same at heart. Happy he who weds a handsome face and a large dowry. What more can he desire?"

Glaucus sighed.

They were now in a street less crowded than the rest, at the end of which they beheld that broad and most lovely sea, which upon those delicious coasts seems to have renounced its prerogative of terror—so soft are the crisping winds that hover around its bosom, so glowing and so various are the hues which it takes from the rosy clouds, so fragrant are the perfumes which the breezes from the land scatter over its depths. From such a sea might you well believe that Anadyomene rose to take the empire of the earth.

"It is still early for the bath," said the Greek, who was the creature of every poetical impulse; "let us wander from the crowded city, and look upon the sea while the noon yet laughs along its billows."

"With all my heart," said Clodius; "and the bay too is always the most animated part of the city."

Pompeii was the miniature of the civilization of that age. Within the narrow compass of its walls was contained, as it were, a specimen of every gift which luxury offered to power. In its minute but glittering shops, its tiny palaces, its baths, its forum, its theatre, its circus—in the energy yet corruption, in the refinement yet the vice, of its people, you beheld a model of the whole empire. It was a toy, a plaything, a showbox, in which the gods seemed pleased to keep the representation of the Great Monarchy of Earth, and which they afterward hid from Time to give to the wonder of Posterity,—the moral of the maxim, that under the sun there is nothing new.

Crowded in the glassy bay were the vessels of commerce and the gilded galleys for the pleasures of the rich citizens. The boats of the fishermen

glided rapidly to and fro; and afar off you saw the tall masts of the fleet under the command of Pliny. Upon the shore sat a Sicilian, who, with vehement gestures and flexible features, was narrating to a group of fishermen and peasants a strange tale of shipwrecked mariners and friendly dolphins, — just as at this day, in the modern neighbourhood, you may hear upon the Mole of Naples.

Drawing his comrade from the crowd, the Greek bent his steps towards a solitary part of the beach, and the two friends, seated on a small crag which rose amid the smooth pebbles, inhaled the voluptuous and cooling breeze, which, dancing over the waters, kept music with its invisible feet. There was perhaps something in the scene that invited them to silence and reverie. Clodius, shading his eyes from the burning sky, was calculating the gains of the last week; and the Greek, leaning upon his hand, and shrinking not from that sun — his nation's tutelary deity — with whose fluent light of poesy, and joy, and love, his own veins were filled, gazed upon the broad expanse, and envied, perhaps, every wind that bent its pinions towards the shores of Greece.

"Tell me, Clodius" said the Greek at last, "hast thou ever been in love?"

"Yes, very often."

"He who has loved often," answered Glaucus, "has loved never. There is but one Eros, though there are many counterfeits of him."

"The counterfeits are not bad little gods, upon the whole," answered Clodius.

"I agree with you," returned the Greek. "I adore even the shadow of Love; but I adore himself yet more."

"Art thou then in sober and earnest love? Hast thou that feeling the poets describe — a feeling that makes us neglect our suppers, forswear the theatre, and write elegies? I should never have thought it. You dissemble well."

"I am not far gone enough for that," returned Glaucus, smiling; "or rather I say with Tibullus,

"Whom soft Love rules, where'er his path,
Walks safe and sacred."

In fact, I am not in love; but I could be if there were but occasion to see the object. Eros would light his torch, but the priests have given him no oil."

"Shall I guess the object? — Is it not Diomed's daughter? She adores you, and does not affect to conceal it; and, by Hercules! I say again and again, she is both handsome and rich. She will bind the door-posts of her husband with golden fillets."

"No, I do not desire to sell myself. Diomed's daughter is handsome, I grant; and at one time, had she not been the grandchild of a freedman, I might have — Yet no — she carries all her beauty on her face; her manners are not maiden-like, and her mind knows no culture save that of pleasure."

"You are ungrateful. Tell me, then, who is the fortunate virgin?"

"You shall hear, my Clodius. Several months ago, I was sojourning at Neapolis, a city utterly to my own heart, for it still retains the manners and stamp of its Grecian origin, — and it yet merits the name of Parthenope, from its delicious air and its beautiful shores. One day I entered the temple of Minerva to offer up my prayers, not for myself more than for the city on which Pallas smiles no longer. The temple was empty and deserted. The recollections of Athens crowded fast and meltingly upon me: imagining myself still alone in the temple, and absorbed in the ear-

nestness of my devotion, my prayer gushed from my heart to my lips, and I wept as I prayed. I was startled in the midst of my devotions, however, by a deep sigh; I turned suddenly round, and just behind me was a female. She had raised her veil also in prayer; and when our eyes met, methought a celestial ray shot from those dark and shining orbs at once into my soul. Never, my Clodius, have I seen mortal face more exquisitely moulded: a certain melancholy softened and yet elevated its expression; that unutterable something which springs from the soul, and which our sculptors have imparted to the aspect of Psyche, gave her beauty I know not what of divine and noble; tears were rolling down her eyes. I guessed at once that she was also of Athenian lineage; and that in my prayer for Athens her heart had responded to mine. I spoke to her, though with a faltering voice — ‘Art thou not too Athenian,’ said I, ‘O beautiful virgin?’ At the sound of my voice she blushed, and half drew her veil across her face — ‘My forefathers’ ashes,’ said she, ‘repose by the waters of Ilyssus; my birth is of Neapolis; but my heart, as my lineage, is Athenian.’ — ‘Let us then,’ said I, ‘make our offerings together;’ and as the priest now appeared, we stood side by side, while we followed the priest in his ceremonial prayer; together we touched the knees of the goddess — together we laid our olive garlands on the altar. I felt a strange emotion of almost sacred tenderness at this companionship. We, strangers from a far and fallen land, stood together and alone in that temple of our country’s deity: was it not natural that my heart should yearn to my countrywoman, for so I might surely call her? I felt as if I had known her for years, and that simple rite seemed, as by miracle, to operate on the sympathies and ties of time. Silently we left the temple, and I was about to ask her where she dwelt, and if I might be permitted to visit her, when a youth, in whose features there was some kindred resemblance to her own, and who stood upon the steps of the fane, took her by the hand. She turned round and bade me farewell. The crowd separated us; I saw her no more. On reaching my home, I found letters which obliged me to set out for Athens, for my relations threatened me with litigation concerning my inheritance. When that suit was happily over, I repaired once more to Neapolis; I instituted inquiries throughout the whole city, I could discover no clew of my lost countrywoman, and hoping to lose in gayety all remembrance of that beautiful apparition, I hastened to plunge myself amid the luxuries of Pompeii. This is all my history. I do not love; but I remember and regret.”

As Clodius was about to reply, a slow and stately step approached them, and, at the sound it made among the pebbles, each turned, and each recognised the new-comer.

It was a man who had scarcely reached his fortieth year, of tall stature, and of a thin but nervous and sinewy frame. His skin, dark and bronzed, betrayed his Eastern origin; and his features had something Greek in their outline (especially in the chin, the lip, the brow, and the throat), save that the nose was somewhat raised and aquiline; and the bones, hard and visible, forbade that fleshy and waving contour which on the Grecian physiognomy preserved even in manhood the round and beautiful curves of youth. His eyes, large and black as the deepest night, shone with no varying and uncertain lustre. A deep, thoughtful, and half-melancholy calm seemed unalterably fixed in their majestic and commanding gaze. His step and mien were peculiarly sedate and lofty, and something foreign in the fashion and the sober hues of his sweeping garments added to the impressive effect of his quiet countenance and stately form. Each of the young men, in saluting the new-comer, made mechanically, and with care to conceal it from him, a slight gesture or sign with their fingers; for Arbaces the Egyptian was supposed to possess the fatal gift of the evil eye.

"The scene must indeed be beautiful," said Arbaces, with a cold though courteous smile, "which draws the gay Clodius, and Glaucus the all-admired, from the crowded thoroughfares of the city."

"Is Nature ordinarily so unattractive?" asked the Greek.

"To the dissipated—yes."

"An austere reply, but scarcely a wise one. Pleasure delights in contrasts; it is from dissipation that we learn to enjoy solitude, and from solitude dissipation."

"So think the young philosophers of the garden," replied the Egyptian; "they mistake lassitude for meditation, and imagine that, because they are wated with others, they know the delight of loneliness. But not in such jaded bosoms can Nature awaken that enthusiasm which alone draws from her chaste reserve all her unspeakable beauty; she demands from you, not the exhaustion of passion, but all that fervour from which you only seek, in adoring her, a release. When, young Athenian, the Moon revealed herself in visions of light to Endymion, it was after a day passed, not among the feverish haunts of men, but on the still mountains and in the solitary valleys of the hunter."

"Beautiful simile!" cried Glaucus; "most unjust application! Exhausted! ah! youth is never exhausted; and by me, at least, one moment of satiety has never been known!"

Again the Egyptian smiled, but his smile was cold and blighting, and even the unimaginative Clodius froze beneath its light. He did not, however, reply to the passionate exclamation of Glaucus; but, after a pause, he said in a soft and melancholy voice,

"After all, you do right to enjoy the hour while it smiles for you; the rose soon withers, the perfume soon exhales—and we, O Glaucus! strangers in the land, and far from our fathers' ashes, what is there left for us, but pleasure or regret?—for you the first, perhaps for me the last."

The bright eyes of the Greek were suddenly suffused with tears. "Ah, speak not, Arbaces," he cried—"speak not of our ancestors. Let us forget that there were ever other liberties than those of Rome!—and glory—oh vainly would we call her ghost from the fields of Marathon and Thermopylæ!"

"Thy heart rebukes thee while thou speakest," said the Egyptian, "and in thy gayeties this night thou wilt be more mindful of Leena* than of Lais. Vale!"

Thus saying, he gathered his robe around him, and slowly swept away.

"I breathe more freely," said Clodius. "Imitating the Egyptians, we sometimes introduce a skeleton at our feasts. In truth, the presence of such an Egyptian as yon gliding shadow were spectre enough to sour the richest grape of the Falernian."

"Strange man!" said Glaucus, musingly; "yet, dead though he seem to pleasure, and cold to the objects of the world, scandal belies him, or his house and his heart could tell a different tale."

"Ah! there are whispers of other orgies than those of Osiris in his gloomy mansion. He is rich, too, they say. Can we not get him among us, and teach him the charms of dice? Pleasure of pleasures! hot fever of hope and fear! inexpressible unjaded passion! how fiercely beautiful thou art, O Gaming!"

"Inspired—inspired," cried Glaucus, laughing; "the oracle speaks poetry in Clodius. What miracle next?"

* Leena, the heroic mistress of Brislogeiton—when put to the torture she bit out her tongue, that the pain might not induce her to betray the conspiracy against the Pisistratids. The statue of a tongueless lioness, erected in her honour, was to be seen at Athens in the time of Pausanias.

CHAPTER III.

PARENTAGE OF GLAUCUS—DESCRIPTION OF THE HOUSES OF POMPEII—A CLASSIC REVEL.

HEAVEN had given to Glaucus every blessing but one: it had given him beauty, health, fortune, genius, illustrious descent, a heart of fire, a mind of poetry; but it had denied him the heritage of freedom. He was born in Athens, the subject of Rome. Succeeding early to an ample inheritance, he had indulged that inclination for travel so natural to the young, and had drunk deep of the intoxicating draught of pleasure, amid the gorgeous luxuries of the imperial court.

He was an Alcibiades without ambition. He was what a man of imagination, youth, fortune, and talents readily becomes when you deprive him of the inspiration of glory. His house at Rome was the theme of the debauchees, but also of the lovers of art; and the sculptors of Greece delighted to task their skill in adorning the porticoes and *exedrae* of an Athenian. His retreat in Pompeii—alas! the colours are faded now, the walls stripped of their paintings!—its main beauty, its elaborate finish of grace and ornament, is gone; yet when first given once more to the day, what eulogies, what wonder did its minute and glowing decorations create—its paintings—its mosaics! Passionately enamoured of poetry and the drama, which recalled to Glaucus the wit and the heroism of his race, that fairy mansion was adorned with representations of *Æschylus* and *Homer*. And antiquaries, who resolve taste to a trade, have turned the patron to the professor, and still (though the error is now acknowledged) they style in custom, as they first named in mistake, the disburied house of the Athenian Glaucus, "THE HOUSE OF THE DRAMATIC POET."

Previous to our description of this house, it may be well to convey to the reader a general notion of the houses of Pompeii, which he will find to resemble strongly the plans of *Vitruvius*; but with all those differences, in detail, of caprice and taste which, being natural to mankind, have always puzzled antiquaries. We shall endeavour to make this description as clear and unpedantic as possible.

You enter then, usually, by a small entrance passage (called *vestibulum*) into a hall, sometimes with (but more frequently without) the ornament of columns: around three sides of this hall are doors communicating with several bed-chambers (among which is the porter's,) the best of these being usually appropriated to country visitors. At the extremity of the hall, on either side to the right and left, if the house is large, there are two small recesses, rather than chambers, generally devoted to the ladies of the mansion; and in the centre of the tessellated pavement of the hall is invariably a square shallow reservoir for rain-water (classically termed *impluvium*,) which was admitted by a hole in the roof above; the said aperture being covered at will by an awning. Near this *impluvium*, which had a peculiar sanctity in the eyes of the ancients, were sometimes (but at Pompeii more rarely than at Rome) placed images of the household gods; the hospitable hearth, often mentioned by the Roman poets, and consecrated to the *Lares*, was, at Pompeii, almost invariably formed by a moveable *braser*; while in some corner, often the most ostentatious place, was deposited a huge wooden chest, ornamented and strengthened by bands of bronze or iron, and secured by strong hooks upon a stone pedestal so firmly as to defy the attempts of any robber to detach it from its position. This chest was supposed to be the money-box or coffer of the master of the house; though,

as no money has been found in any of the chests discovered at Pompeii, it is probable that it was sometimes rather designed for ornament than use.

In this hall (or *atrium*, to speak classically) the clients and visitors of inferior rank were usually received. In the houses of the more "respectable," an *atriensis*, or slave peculiarly devoted to the service of the hall, was invariably retained, and his rank among his fellow-slaves was high and important. The reservoir in the centre must have been rather a dangerous ornament, but the centre of the hall was like the grass-plot of a college, and interdicted to the passers to and fro, who found ample space in the margin. Right opposite the entrance, at the other end of the hall, was an apartment (*tablinum*), in which the pavement was usually adorned with rich mosaics, and the walls covered with elaborate paintings. Here were usually kept the records of the family, or those of any public office that had been filled by the owner: on one side of this saloon, if we may so call it, was often a dining-room, or *triclinium*; on the other side, perhaps, what we should now term a cabinet of gems, containing whatever curiosities were deemed most rare and costly; and invariably a small passage for the slaves to cross to the farther parts of the house without passing the apartments thus mentioned. These rooms all opened on a square or oblong colonnade, technically termed peristyle. If the house was small, its boundary ceased with this colonnade, and in that case its centre, however diminutive, was ordinarily appropriated to the purpose of a garden, and adorned with vases of flowers placed upon pedestals, while under the colonnade, to the right and left, were doors, admitting to bed-rooms,* to a second *triclinium*, or eating-room (for the ancients generally appropriated two rooms at least to that purpose, one for summer and one for winter, or perhaps one for ordinary, the other for festive occasions;) and if the owner affected letters, a cabinet, dignified by the name of library, — for a very small room was sufficient to contain the few rolls of papyrus which the ancients deemed a notable collection of books.

At the end of the peristyle was generally the kitchen. Supposing the house was large, it did not end with the peristyle, and the centre thereof was not in that case a garden, but might be perhaps adorned with a fountain, or basin for fish, and at its end, exactly opposite to the *tablinum*, was generally another eating-room, on either side of which were bed-rooms, and perhaps a picture-saloon, or *pinathea*.† These apartments communicated again with a square or oblong space, usually adorned on three sides with a colonnade like the peristyle, and very much resembling the peristyle, only longer. This was the proper *viridarium* or garden, being usually adorned with a fountain, or statues, and a profusion of gay flowers: at its extreme end was the gardener's house; on either side beneath the colonnade were sometimes, if the size of the family required it, additional rooms.

At Pompeii, a second or third story was rarely of importance, being built only above a small part of the house, and containing rooms for the slaves; differing in this respect from the more magnificent edifices of Rome, which generally contained the principal eating-room (or *cenaculum*), on the second floor. The apartments themselves were ordinarily of small size; for in those delightful climes they received any extraordinary number of visitors in the peristyle (or portico,) the hall, or the garden; and even their banquet-rooms, however elaborately adorned and carefully selected in point of aspect, were of diminutive proportions; for the intellectual ancients, being fond of society, not of crowds, rarely feasted more than nine at a time, so that large dinner-rooms were not so necessary with them as with

* The Romans had bed-rooms appropriated not only to the sleep of night, but also to the day siesta (*cubicula diurna*.)

† In the stately palaces of Rome, the *pinathea* usually communicated with the atrium.

us.* But the suite of rooms seen at once from the entrance must have had a very imposing effect; you beheld at once the hall richly paved and painted — the tablinum — the graceful peristyle, and (if the house extended farther) the opposite banquet-room and the garden, which closed the view with some gushing fount or marble statue.

The reader will now have a tolerable notion of the Pompeian houses, which resembled in some respects the Grecian, but mostly the Roman, fashion of domestic architecture. In almost every house there is some difference in detail from the rest, but the principal outline is the same in all. In all you find the hall, the tablinum, and the peristyle communicating with each other; in all you find the walls richly painted, and in all the evidence of a people fond of the refining elegancies of life. The purity of the taste of the Pompeians in decoration is however questionable: they were fond of the gaudiest colours, of fantastic designs: they often painted the lower half of their columns a bright red, leaving the rest uncoloured; and where the garden was small, its wall was frequently tinted to deceive the eye as to its extent, imitating trees, birds, temples, &c. in perspective — a meretricious delusion which the graceful pedantry of Pliny himself adopted, with a complacent pride in its ingenuity.

But the house of Glaucus was at once one of the smallest, and yet of the most adorned and finished, of all the private mansions of Pompeii; it would be a model at this day for the house of "a single man in Mayfair," — the envy and despair of the cœlibian purchasers of buhl and marquetry.

You enter by a long and narrow vestibule, on the floor of which is the image of a dog in mosaic, with the well-known "Cave canem," or "Beware the dog." On either side is a chamber of some size; for the interior house not being large enough to contain the two great divisions of private and public apartments, these two rooms were set apart for the reception of visitors who neither by rank nor familiarity were entitled to admission in the penetralia of the mansion.

Advancing up the vestibule, you enter an atrinum, that when first discovered was rich in paintings, which in *point of expression* would scarcely disgrace a Raphael. You may see them now transplanted to the Neapolitan Museum; they are still the admiration of connoisseurs, — they depict the parting of Achilles and Briseis. Who does not acknowledge the force, the vigour, the beauty! employed in delineating the forms and faces of Achilles and the immortal slave!

On one side the atrinum, a small staircase admitted to the apartments for the slaves on the second floor; there too were two or three small bedrooms, the walls of which portrayed the rape of Europa, the battle of the Amazons, &c.

You now enter the tablinum, across which at either end hung rich draperies of Tyrian purple, half withdrawn.† On the walls were depicted a poet reading his verses to his friends, and in the pavement was inserted a small and most exquisite mosaic, typical of the instructions given by the director of the stage to his comedians.

You passed through this saloon and entered the peristyle; and here (as I have said before was usually the case with the smaller houses of Pompeii) the mansion ended. From each of the seven columns that adorned this court hung festoons of garlands; the centre, supplying the place of a garden, bloomed with the rarest flowers, placed in vases of white marble, that were supported on pedestals. At the left end of this small garden was a diminutive fane, resembling one of those small chapels placed at the side of roads in Catholic countries, and dedicated to the Penates; before it stood a bronze tripod; to the left of the colonnade were two small cubi-

* When they entertained very large parties, the feast was usually served in the hall.

† The tablinum was also secured at pleasure by sliding-doors.

culi or bed-rooms; to the right was the triclinium, in which the guests were now assembled.

This room is usually termed by the antiquaries of Naples, "the chamber of Leda;" and in the beautiful work of Sir William Gell, the reader will find an engraving from that most delicate and graceful painting of Leda presenting her new-born to her husband, from which the room derives its name. This beautiful apartment opened upon the fragrant garden. Round the table of citrean* wood, highly polished and delicately wrought with silver arabesques, were placed the three couches, which were yet more common at Pompeii than the semicircular seat that had grown lately into fashion at Rome; and on these couches of bronze, studded with richer metals, were laid thick quiltings covered with elaborate broi'dery, and yielding luxuriously to the pressure.

"Well, I must own," said the edile Panæa, "that your house, though scarcely larger than a case for one's fibulæ, is a gem of its kind. How beautiful painted is that parting of Achilles and Briseis! — what a style! — what heads! — what a — hem!"

"Praise from Panæa is indeed valuable on such subjects," said Clodius, gravely. "Why, the paintings on *his* walls — Ah! there is, indeed, the hand of a Zeuxis!"

"You flatter me, my Clodius; indeed you do," quoth the edile, who was celebrated through Pompeii for having the worst paintings in the world; for he was patriotic, and patronised none but Pompeians, — "you flatter me: but there is something pretty — *Ædopol*, yes — in the colours, to say nothing of the design; — and then for the kitchen, my friends — ah! that was all my fancy."

"What is the design?" said Glaucus. "I have not yet seen your kitchen, though I have often witnessed the excellence of its cheer."

"A cook, my Athenian — a cook sacrificing the trophies of his skill on the altar of Vesta, with a beautiful *mursena* (taken from the life) on a spit at a distance: there is some invention there!"

At that instant the slaves appeared, bearing a tray covered with the first preparative initia of the feast. Amid delicious figs, fresh herbs strowed with snow, anchovies, and eggs, were ranged small cups of diluted wine sparingly mixed with honey. As these were placed on the table, young slaves bore round to each of the five guests (for there were no more) the silver basin of perfumed water and napkins edged with a purple fringe. But the edile ostentatiously drew forth his own napkin, which was not, indeed, of so fine a linen, but in which the fringe was twice as broad, and wiped his hands with the parade of a man who felt he was calling for admiration.

"A splendid *mappa* that of yours," said Clodius; "why, the fringe is as broad as a girdle."

"A trifle, my Clodius, a trifle! They tell me this stripe is the latest fashion at Rome; but Glaucus attends to these things more than I."

"Be propitious, O *Bacchus*!" said Glaucus, inclining reverentially to a beautiful image of the god placed in the centre of the table, at the corners of which stood the Lares and the saltholders. The guests followed the prayer, and then, sprinkling the wine on the table, they performed the wonted libation.

This over, the convivialists reclined themselves on the couches, and the business of the hour commenced.

"May this cup be my last!" said the young Sallust, as the table, cleared of its first stimulants, was now loaded with the substantial part of the enter-

* The most valued wood—not the modern citron-tree. Some, among whom is my learned friend Mr. W. S. Landor, conjecture it, with much plausibility, to have been mahogany.

tainment, and the ministering slave poured forth to him a brimming cyathus—"May this cup be my last, but it is the best wine I have drunk at Pompeii!"

"Bring hither the amphora," said Glaucus; "and read its date and its character."

The slave hastened to inform the party that the scroll fastened to the cork betokened its birth from Chios, and its age a ripe fifty years.

"How deliciously the snow has cooled it!" said Pansa; "it is just enough."

"It is like the experience of a man who has cooled his pleasures sufficiently to give them a double zest," exclaimed Sallust.

"It is like a woman's No," added Glaucus; "it cools but to inflame the more."

"When is our next wild-beast fight?" said Clodius to Pansa.

"It stands fixed for the ninth ides of August," answered Pansa, "on the day after the Vulcanalia; we have a most lovely young lion for the occasion."

"Whom shall we get for him to eat?" asked Clodius. "Alas! there is a great scarcity of criminals. You must positively find some innocent or other to condemn to the lion, Pansa!"

"Indeed I have thought very seriously about it of late," replied the edile gravely. "It was a most infamous law that which forbade us to send our own slaves to the wild beasts. Not to let us do what we like with our own, that's what I call an infringement on property itself."

"Not so in the good old days of the republic," sighed Sallust.

"And then this pretended mercy to the slaves is such a disappointment to the poor people. How they do love to see a good tough battle between a man and a lion! and all this innocent pleasure they may lose (if the gods don't send us a good criminal soon) from this cursed law."

"What can be worse policy," said Clodius, sententiously, "than to interfere with the manly amusements of the people?"

"Well, thank Jupiter and the Fates! we have no Nero at present," said Sallust.

"He was, indeed, a tyrant; he shut up our amphitheatre for ten years."

"I wonder it did not create a rebellion," said Sallust.

"It very nearly did," returned Pansa, with his mouth full of wild boar.

Here the conversation was interrupted for a moment by a flourish of flutes, and two slaves entered with a single dish.

"Ah! what delicacy hast thou in store for us now, my Glaucus?" cried the young Sallust, with sparkling eyes.

Sallust was only twenty-four, but he had no pleasure in life like eating—perhaps he had exhausted all the others; yet had he some talent, and an excellent heart—as far as it went.

"I know its face, by Pollux!" cried Pansa; "it is an Ambracian kid. Ho!" snapping his fingers, a usual signal to the slaves, "we must prepare a new libation in honour to the new-comer."

"I had hoped," said Glaucus, in a melancholy tone, "to have procured you some oysters from Britain; but the winds that were so cruel to Caesar have forbid us the oysters."

"Are they in truth so delicious?" asked Lepidus, loosening to a yet more luxurious ease his ungirdled tunic.

"Why, in truth I suspect it is the distance that gives the flavour; they want the richness of the Brundisium oyster. But at Rome no supper is complete without them."

"The poor Britons! There is some good in them after all," said Sallust; "they produce an oyster!"

"I wish they would produce us a gladiator," said the edile, whose provident mind was still musing over the wants of the amphitheatre.

"By Pallas!" cried Glaucus, as his favourite slave crowned his steaming locks with a new chaplet, "I love these wild spectacles well enough when beast fights beast; but when a man, one with bones and blood like ours, is coldly put on the arena, and torn limb from limb, the interest is too horrid: I sicken — I gasp for breath — I long to rush and defend him. The yells of the populace seem to me more dire than the voices of the Furies chasing Orestes. I rejoice that there is so little chance of that bloody exhibition for our next show!"

The edile shrugged his shoulders; the young Sallust, who was thought the best-natured man in Pompeii, stared in surprise. The graceful Lepidus, who rarely spoke for fear of disturbing his features, cried, "Per Hercle!" The parasite Clodius muttered, "Ædepol;" and the sixth banqueter, who was the umbra of Clodius, (b) and whose duty it was to echo his richer friend when he could not praise him — the parasite of a parasite, — muttered also, "Ædepol."

"Well, you Italians are used to these spectacles; we Greeks are more merciful. Ah, shade of Pindar! — the rapture of a true Grecian game — the emulation of man against man — the generous strife — the half mournful triumph — so proud to contend with a noble foe, so sad to see him overcome! But ye understand me not."

"The kid is excellent," said Sallust.

The slave whose duty it was to carve, and who valued himself on his science, had just performed that office on the kid to the sound of music, his knife keeping time, beginning with a low tenor, and accomplishing the arduous feat amid a magnificent diapason.

"Your cook is of course from Sicily?" said Pansa.

"Yes, of Syracuse."

"I will play you for him," said Clodius; "we will have a game between the courses."

"Better that sort of game, certainly, than a beast-fight; but I cannot stake my Sicilian — you have nothing so precious to stake me in return."

"My Phillida — my beautiful dancing girl."

"I never buy women," said the Greek, carelessly re-arranging his chaplet.

(b) "The sixth banqueter, who was the umbra of Clodius."

A very curious and interesting treatise might be written on the parasites of Greece and Rome. In the former they were more degraded than in the latter country. The Epistles of Alciphron express in a lively manner the insults which they underwent for the sake of a dinner: one man complains that fish-sauce was thrown into his eyes — that he was beat on the head, and given to eat stones covered with honey, while a courtesan threw at him a bladder filled with blood, which burst on his face and covered him with the stream. The manner in which these parasites repaid the hospitality of their hosts was like that of modern diners out, by witty jokes and amusing stories; sometimes they indulged practical jokes on each other, "boxing one another's ears." The magistrates of Athens appear to have looked very sternly upon these hungry buffoons, and they complain of stripes and a prison with no philosophical resignation. In fact, the parasite seems at Athens to have answered the purpose of the fool of the middle ages; but he was far more worthless, and perhaps more witty — the associate of courtesans, uniting the pimp with the buffoon. This is a character peculiar to Greece. The Latin comic writers make indeed prodigal use of the parasite; yet he appears at Rome to have held a somewhat higher rank, and to have met with a somewhat milder treatment, than at Athens. Nor do the delineations of Terence, which, in portraying Athenian manners, probably soften down whatever would have been exaggerated to a Roman audience, present so degraded or so abandoned a character as the parasite of Alciphron and Athenæus. The more haughty and fastidious Romans often disdained, indeed, to admit such buffoons as companions, and hired (as we may note in Pliny's Epistles) fools or mountebanks to entertain their guests and supply the place of the Grecian parasite. When (be it observed) Clodius is styled parasite in the text, the reader must take the modern, not the ancient, interpretation of the word.

A very feeble but very flattering reflex of the parasite was the umbra or shadow, who accompanied any invited guest, and who was sometimes a man of equal consequence, though usually a poor relative or an humble friend — in modern cant "a toady." Such is the umbra of our friend Clodius.

The musicians, who were stationed in the portico without, had commenced their office with the kid; they now directed the melody into a more soft, a more gay, yet it may be a more intellectual, strain; and they chanted that song of Horace, beginning "*Persicos odi*," &c. so impossible to translate, and which they imagined applicable to a feast that, effeminate as it seems to us, was simple enough for the gorgeous revelry of the time. We are witnessing the domestic and not the princely feast — the entertainment of a gentleman, not of an emperor or a senator.

"Ah, good old Horace," said Sallust, compassionately; "he sang well of feasts and girls, but not like our modern poets."

"The immortal Fulvius, for instance," said Clodius.

"Ah, Fulvius the immortal!" said the umbra.

"And Spuræna, and Caius Mutius, who wrote three epics in a year — could Horace do that, or Virgil either?" said Lepidus. "Those old poets all fell into the mistake of copying sculpture instead of painting. Simplicity and repose — that was their notion: but we moderns have fire, and passions, and energy — we never sleep, we imitate the colours of painting, its life and its action. Immortal Fulvius!"

"By-the-way," said Sallust, "have you seen the new ode by Spuræna, in honour of our Egyptian Isis? — It is magnificent — the true religious fervour."

"Isis seems a favourite divinity at Pompeii," said Glaucus.

"Yes!" said Pansa, "she is exceedingly in repute just at this moment; her statue has been uttering the most remarkable oracles. I am not superstitious, but I must confess that she has more than once assisted me materially in my magistracy with her advice. Her priests are so pious too! none of your gay, none of your proud ministers of Jupiter and Fortune; they walk barefoot, eat no meat, and pass the greater part of the night in solitary devotion!"

"An example to our other priesthoods, indeed! — Jupiter's temple wants reforming sadly," said Lepidus, who was a great reformer for all but himself.

"They say that Arbaces the Egyptian has imparted some most solemn mysteries to the priests of Isis," observed Sallust; "he boasts his descent from the race of Rameses, and declares that in his family the secrets of remotest antiquity are treasured."

"He certainly possesses the gift of the evil eye," said Clodius: "if I ever come upon that Medusa front without the previous charm, I am sure to lose a favourite horse, or throw the *canes** nine times running."

"The last would be indeed a miracle!" said Sallust, gravely.

"How mean you, Sallust?" returned the gamester, with a flushed brow.

"I mean what you would *leave* me if I played often with you; and that is — nothing."

Clodius answered only by a smile of disdain.

"If Arbaces were not so rich," said Pansa, with a stately air, "I should stretch my authority a little, and inquire into the truth of the report which calls him an astrologer and a sorcerer. Agrippa, when edile of Rome, banished all such terrible citizens. But a rich man — it is the duty of an edile to protect the rich!"

"What think you of this new sect, which I am told has even a few proselytes in Pompeii, these followers of the Hebrew God — Christus?"

"Oh, mere speculative visionaries," said Clodius; "they have not a single gentleman among them; their proselytes are poor, insignificant, ignorant people!"

"Who ought, however, to be crucified for their blasphemy!" said Pansa,

* *Canes* or *canicula*, the lowest throw at dice.

with vehemence; "they deny Venus and Jove! Nazarene is but another name for atheist. Let me catch them, that's all!"

The second course was gone — the feasters fell back on their couches — there was a pause while they listened to the soft voices of the South, and the music of the Arcadian reed. Glaucus was the most rapt and the least inclined to break the silence, but Clodius began already to think that they wasted time.

"*Bene vobis*, (your health,) my Glaucus," said he, quaffing a cup to each letter of the Greek's name, with the ease of the practised drinker. "Will you not be avenged on your ill-fortune of yesterday? See, the dice court us."

"As you will!" said Glaucus.

"The dice in August, and I an edile,"(c) said Pansa, magisterially; "it is against all law."

"Not in your presence, grave Pansa," returned Clodius, rattling the dice in a long box; "your presence restrains all license; it is not the thing, but the excess of the thing, that hurts."

"What wisdom!" murmured the umbra.

"Well, I will look another way," said the edile.

"Not yet, good Pansa; let us wait till we have supped," said Glaucus.

Clodius reluctantly yielded, concealing his vexation with a yawn.

"He gapes to devour the gold," whispered Lepidus to Sallust, in a quotation from the *Aulularia* of Plautus.

"Ah! how well I know these polypi, who hold all they touch," answered Sallust, in the same tone, and out of the same play.

The second course, consisting of a variety of fruits, pistachio nuts, sweetmeats, tarts, and confectionary tortured into a thousand fantastic and airy shapes, was now placed upon the table, and the ministri, or attendants, also set there the wine (which had hitherto been handed round to the guests) in large jugs of glass, each bearing upon it the schedule of its age and quality.

"Taste this Lesbian, my Pansa," said Sallust; "it is excellent."

"It is not very old," said Glaucus, "but it has been made precocious, like ourselves, by being put to the fire; the wine to the flames of Vulcan, we to those of his wife, to whose honour I pour this cup."

"It is delicate," said Pansa, "but there is perhaps the least particle too much of rosin in its flavour."

"What a beautiful cup!" cried Clodius, taking up one of transparent crystal, the handles of which were wrought with gems, and twisted in the shape of serpents, the favourite fashion at Pompeii.

"This ring," said Glaucus, taking a costly jewel from the first joint of his finger and hanging it on the handle, "gives it a richer show, and renders it less unworthy of thy acceptance, my Clodius, whom may the gods give health and fortune long and oft to crown it to the brim!"

"You are too generous, Glaucus," said the gamester, handing the cup to his slave, "but your love gives it a double value."

"This cup to the Graces!" said Pansa, and he thrice emptied his calix. The guests followed his example.

"We have appointed no director to the feast," cried Sallust.

"Let us throw for him, then," said Clodius, rattling the dice-box.

"Nay," cried Glaucus; "no cold and trite director for us; no dictator of the banquet; no *rex convivi*. Have not the Romans sworn never to obey a king? shall we be less free than your ancestors? Ho! musicians,

(c) "The dice is August, and I an edile!"

All games of chance were forbidden by law ("*Venia legibus alia*."—Horat. Od. 24, l. 3.) except "in Saturnaliis," during the month of December: the ediles were charged with enforcing this law, which, like all laws against gaming, in all times, was wholly ineffectual.

let us have the song I composed the other night ; it has a verse on this subject, ' The Bacchic Hymn of the Hours.' "

The musicians struck their instruments to a wild Ionic air, while the youngest voices in the band chanted forth in Greek words, as numbers, the following strain :

THE EVENING HYMN OF THE HOURS.

I.

Through the summer day, through the weary day,
 We have glided long ;
 Ere we sped to the night through her portals gray,
 Hail us with song !—
 With song, with song,
 With a bright and joyous song,
 Such as the Cretan maid,
 While the twilight made her bolder,
 Woke, high through the ivy shade,
 When the wine-god first consoled her.
 From the hush'd low-breathing skies,
 Half-shut, look'd their starry eyes,
 And all around,
 With a loving sound,
 The Ægean waves were creeping,
 On her lap lay the lynx's head ;
 Wild thyme was her bridal bed ;
 And aye through each tiny space,
 In the green vine's green embrace,
 The fauns were slyly peeping ;—
 The fauns, the prying fauns—
 The arch, the laughing fauns—
 The fauns were slyly peeping !

II.

Flagging and faint are we
 With our ceaseless flight,
 And dull shall our journey be
 Through the realm of night.
 Bathe us, O bathe our weary wings,
 In the purple wave, as it freshly spring
 To your cups from the fount of light—
 From the fount of light—from the fount of light :
 For there, when the sun has gone down in night,
 There in the bowl we find him.
 The grape is the well of that summer sun,
 Or rather the stream that he gazed upon,
 Till he left in truth, like the Thespian youth,*
 His soul as he gazed, behind him.

III.

A cup to Jove, and a cup to Love,
 And a cup to the son of Maia,
 And honour with three, the band zone-free,
 The band of the bright Aglaia.
 But since every bud in the wreath of pleasure
 Ye owe to the sister Hours,
 No stinted cups in a formal measure,
 The Bromian law make ours.
 He honours us most who gives us most,
 And boasts with a Bacchanal's honest boast
 He never will count the treasure.

* Narcissus.

Fastly we fleet, then seize our wings,
And plunge us deep in the sparkling springs;
And aye, as we rise with a dripping plume,
We'll scatter the spray round the garland's bloom.

We glow — we glow.

Behold, as the girls of the Eastern wave
Bore once with a shout to their crystal cave

The prize of the Mysian Hylas,

Even so — even so,

We have caught the young god in our warm embrace,

We hurry him on in our laughing race;

We hurry him on, with a whoop and song,

The cloudy rivers of Night along —

Ho, ho! — we have caught thee, Psilas!

The guests applauded loudly: when the poet is your host, his verses are sure to charm.

"Thoroughly Greek," said Lepidus: "the wildness, force, and energy of that tongue it is impossible to imitate in the Roman poetry."

"It is indeed a great contrast," said Clodius, ironically at heart, though not in appearance, "to the old-fashioned and tame simplicity of that ode of Horace which we heard before. The air is beautifully Ionic: the word puts me in mind of a toast — Companions, I give you the beautiful Ione."

"Ione — the name is Greek," said Glaucus, in a soft voice, "I drink the health with delight. But who is Ione?"

"Ah! you have but just come to Pompeii, or you would deserve ostracism for your ignorance" said Lepidus, conceitedly; "not to know Ione is not to know the chief charm of our city."

"She is of most rare beauty," said Pansa; "and what a voice!"

"She can feed only on nightingales' tongues," said Clodius.

"Nightingales' tongues! — beautiful thought," sighed the umbra.

"Enlighten me, I beseech you," said Glaucus.

"Know then," began Lepidus —

"Let me speak," cried Clodius; "you drawl out your words as if you spoke tortoises."

"And you speak stones," muttered the coxcomb to himself, as he fell back disdainfully on his couch.

"Know then, my Glaucus," said Clodius, "that Ione is a stranger, who has but lately come to Pompeii. She sings like Sappho, and her songs are her own composing; and as for the tibia, and the cithara, and the lyre, I know not in which she most outdoes the Muses. Her beauty is most dazzling. Her house is perfect; such taste — such gems — such bronzes! She is rich, and generous as she is rich."

"Her lovers, of course," said Glaucus, "take care that she does not starve; and money lightly won is always lavishly spent."

"Her lovers — ah, there is the enigma! Ione has but one vice — she is chaste. She has all Pompeii at her feet, and she has no lovers: she will not even marry."

"No lovers!" echoed Glaucus.

"No; she has the soul of Vesta, with the girdle of Venus."

"What refined expressions!" said the umbra.

"A miracle!" cried Glaucus. "Can we not see her?"

"I will take you there this evening," said Clodius; "meanwhile," added he, once more rattling the dice —

"I am yours!" said the complaisant Glaucus. "Pansa, turn your face!"

Lepidus and Sallust played at odd and even, and the umbra looked on, while Glaucus and Clodius became gradually absorbed in the chances of the dice.

"Per Jove!" cried Glaucus, "this is the second time I have thrown the caniculæ" (the lowest throw).

"Now Venus befriend me!" said Clodius, rattling the box for several moments; "O Alma Venus—it is Venus herself!" as he threw the highest cast named from that goddess, — whom he who wins money indeed usually propitiates!

"Venus is ungrateful to me," said Glaucus, gayly; "I have always sacrificed on her altar."

"He who plays with Clodius," whispered Lepidus, "will soon, like Plautus's Curculio, put his pallium for the stakes."

"Poor Glaucus — he is as blind as Fortune herself," replied Sallust, in the same tone.

"I will play no more," said Glaucus. "I have lost thirty sestertia."

"I am sorry," began Clodius.

"Amiable man!" groaned the umbra.

"Not at all!" exclaimed Glaucus; "the pleasure of your gain compensates the pain of my loss."

The conversation now became general and animated; the wine circulated more freely; and Ione once more became the subject of eulogy to the guests of Glaucus.

"Instead of outwatching the star, let us visit one at whose beauty the stars grow pale," said Lepidus.

Clodius, who saw no chance of renewing the dice, seconded the proposal; and Glaucus, though he civilly pressed his guests to continue the banquet, could not but let them see that his curiosity had been excited by the praises of Ione; they therefore resolved to adjourn (all at least but Pansa and the umbra) to the house of the fair Greek. They drank, therefore, to the health of Glaucus and of Titus — they performed their last libation — they resumed their slippers — they descended the stairs — passed the illumined atrium — and walking unbitten over the fierce dog painted on the threshold, found themselves beneath the light of the moon just risen, in the lively and still crowded streets of Pompeii. They passed the jewellers' quarter, sparkling with lights, caught and reflected by the gems displayed in the shops, and arrived at last at the door of Ione. The vestibule blazed with rows of lamps; curtains of embroidered purple hung on either aperture of the tablinum, whose walls and mosaic pavement glowed with the richest colours of the artist; and under the portico which surrounded the odorous viridarium, they found Ione already surrounded by adoring and applauding guests.

"Did you say she was Athenian?" whispered Glaucus, ere he passed into the peristyle.

"No, she is from Neapolis."

"Neapolis!" echoed Glaucus; and at that moment, the group dividing on either side of Ione gave to his view that bright, that nymph-like beauty which for months had shone down upon the waters of his memory.

CHAPTER IV.

THE TEMPLE OF ISIS — ITS PRIEST — THE CHARACTER OF ARBACES DEVELOPS ITSELF.

THE story returns to the Egyptian. We left Arbaces upon the shores of the noon-day sea, after he had parted from Glaucus and his companions. As he approached to the more crowded part of the bay, he paused and

gazed upon that animated scene with folded arms, and a bitter smile upon his dark features.

"Gulls, dupes, fools that ye are!" muttered he to himself; "whether business or pleasure, trade or religion be your pursuit, you are equally cheated by the passions that ye should rule! How I could loathe you, if I did not hate—yes, hate!—Greek or Roman, it is from us, from the dark lore of Egypt, that ye have stolen the fire that gives you souls—your knowledge—your poesy—your laws—your arts—your barbarous mastery of war (all how tame and mutilated, when compared with the vast original!)—ye have filched, as a slave filches the fragments of the feast, from us! And now, ye imitators of a mimic,—Romans forsooth! the mushroom herd of robbers!—ye are our masters! the Pyramids look down no more on the race of Rameses—the eagle cowers over the serpent of the Nile. Our masters—no, not mine! My soul, by the power of its wisdom, controls and chains you, though the fetters are unseen. So long as craft can master force, so long as religion has a cave from which oracles can dupe mankind, the wise hold an empire over earth. Even from your vices Arbaces distils his pleasures;—pleasures unprofaned by vulgar eyes—pleasures vast, wealthy, inexhaustible, of which your enervate minds, in their unimaginative sensuality, cannot conceive or dream. Plod on, plod on, fools of ambition and of avarice! your petty thirst for fasces and questorships, and all the mummery of servile power, provokes my laughter and my scorn. My power can extend wherever man believes. I ride over the souls that the purple veils. Thebes may fall, Egypt be a name; the world itself furnishes the subjects of Arbaces."

Thus saying, the Egyptian moved slowly on; and, entering the town, his tall figure towered above the crowded throng of the forum, and swept towards the small but graceful temple consecrated to Isis. (d).

That edifice was then but of recent erection; the ancient temple had been thrown down in the earthquake sixteen years before, and the new

(d) "The small but graceful temple consecrated to Isis."

Sylla is said to have transported to Italy the worship of the Egyptian Isis.* It soon became "the rage," and was peculiarly in vogue with the Roman ladies. Its priesthood were sworn to chastity, and, like all such brotherhoods, were noted for their licentiousness. Juvenal styles the priestesses by a name (*Isiacæ lenæ*) that denotes how convenient they were to lovers; and under the mantle of night many an amorous intrigue was carried on in the purlieus of the sacred temples. A lady vowed for so many nights to watch by the shrine of Isis: it was a sacrifice of continence towards her husband, to be bestowed on her lover! While one passion of human nature was thus appealed to, another scarcely less strong was also pressed into the service of the goddess—namely, credulity. The priests of Isis arrogated a knowledge of magic and of the future. Among women of all classes, and among many of the hardier sex, the Egyptian sorceries were consulted and revered as oracles. Voltaire, with much plausible ingenuity, endeavours to prove that the gipsies are a remnant of the ancient priest and priestesses of Isis, intermixed with those of the goddess of Syria. In the time of Apuleius these holy impostors had lost their dignity and importance; despised and poor, they wandered from place to place, selling prophecies and curing disorders; and Voltaire shrewdly bids us remark, that Apuleius has not forgot their peculiar skill in filching from out-houses and court-yards; after they practised palmistry and singular dances—(query, the Bohemian dances?) "Such," says the too conclusive Frenchman, "has been the end of the ancient religion of Isis and Osiris, whose very names still impress us with awe." At the time in which my story is cast, the worship of Isis was, however, in the highest repute; and the wealthy devotees sent even to the Nile, that they might sprinkle its mysterious waters over the altars of the goddess. I have introduced the ibis, in the sketch of the temple of Isis, although it has been supposed that that bird languished and died when taken from Egypt. But from various reasons, too long now to enumerate, I believe that the ibis was by no means unfrequent in the Italian temples of Isis, though it rarely lived long, and refused to breed in a foreign climate.

* In the Campanian cities, the trade with Alexandria was probably more efficacious than the plety of Sylla (no very popular example perhaps) in establishing the worship of the favourite deity of Egypt.

building had become as much in vogue with the versatile Pompeians as a new church or a new preacher may be with us. The oracles of the goddess at Pompeii were indeed remarkable not more for the mysterious language in which they were clothed, than for the credit which was attached to their mandates and predictions. If they were not dictated by a divinity, they were framed at least by a profound knowledge of mankind; they applied themselves exactly to the circumstances of individuals, and made a notable contrast to the vague and loose generalities of their rival temples. As Arbaces now arrived at the rails which separated the profane from the sacred place, a crowd, composed of all classes, but especially of the commercial, collected, breathless and reverential, before the many altars which rose in the open court. In the walls of the cella, elevated on seven steps of Parian marble, various statues stood in niches, and those walls were ornamented with the pomegranate consecrated to Isis. An oblong pedestal occupied the interior building, on which stood two statues, one of Isis, and its companion represented the silent and mystic Orus. But the building contained many other deities to grace the court of the Egyptian deity: her kindred and many-titled Bacchus, and the Cyprian Venus, a Grecian disguise for herself, rising from her bath, and the dog-headed Anubis, and the ox Apis, and various Egyptian idols of uncouth form and unknown appellations.

But we must not suppose that among the cities of Magna Græcia, Isis was worshipped with those forms and ceremonies which were of right her own. The mongrel and modern nations of the south, with a mingled arrogance and ignorance, confounded the worships of all climes and ages; and the profound mysteries of the Nile were degraded by a hundred meretricious and frivolous admixtures from the creeds of Cephisus and of Tibur. The temple of Isis in Pompeii was served by Roman and Greek priests, ignorant alike of the language and the customs of her ancient votaries; and the descendant of the dread Egyptian kings, beneath the appearance of reverential awe, now secretly laughed to scorn the puny mummeries which imitated the solemn and typical worship of his burning clime.

Ranged now on either side the steps was the sacrificial crowd, arrayed in white garments, while at the summit stood two of the inferior priests, the one holding a palm-branch, the other a slender sheaf of corn. In the narrow passage in front thronged the bystanders.

"And what," whispered Arbaces to one of the bystanders, who was a merchant engaged in the Alexandrian trade, which trade had probably first introduced in Pompeii the worship of the Egyptian goddess—"what occasion now assembles you before the altars of the venerable Isis? It seems, by the white robes of the group before me, that a sacrifice is to be rendered, and by the assembly of the priests, that ye are prepared for some oracle. To what question is it to vouchsafe a reply?"

"We are merchants," replied the bystander (who was no other than Diomed,) in the same voice, "who seek to know the fate of our vessels, which sail for Alexandria to-morrow. We are about to offer up a sacrifice, and implore an answer from the goddess. I am not one of those who have petitioned the priest to sacrifice, as you may see by my dress, but I have some interest in the success of the fleet:—*per Jove!* yes. I have a pretty trade, else how could I live in these hard times?"

The Egyptian replied gravely, "that though Isis was properly the goddess of agriculture, she was no less the patron of commerce." Then turning his head towards the east, Arbaces seemed absorbed in silent prayer.

And now in the centre of the steps appeared a priest robed in white from head to foot, the veil parting over the crown: two new priests relieved those hitherto stationed at either corner, being naked half-way down the breast, and covered, for the rest, in white and loose robes. At the same time,

seated at the bottom of the steps, a priest commenced a solemn air upon a long wind-instrument of music. Half way down the steps stood another flamen, holding in one hand the votive wreath, in the other a white wand; while, adding to the picturesque scene of that Eastern ceremony the stately ibis (bird sacred to the Egyptian worship) looked mutely down from the wall upon the rite, or stalked beside the altar at the base of the steps.

At that altar now stood the sacrificial flamen.*

The countenance of Arbaces seemed to lose all its rigid calm while the aruspices inspected the entrails, and to be intent in pious anxiety — to rejoice and brighten as the signs were declared favourable, and the fire began bright and clearly to consume the sacred portion of the victim amid odours of myrrh and frankincense. It was then that a dead silence fell over the whispering crowd, and the priests gathering round the cella, another priest, naked save by a cincture round the middle, rushed forward, and dancing with wild gestures, implored an answer from the goddess. He ceased at last in exhaustion, and a low murmuring noise was heard within the body of the statue: thrice the head moved, and the lips parted, and then a hollow voice uttered these mystic words —

“There are waves like chargers that meet and glow,
There are graves ready wrought in the rocks below;
On the brow of the Future the dangers lower,
But blessed are your barks in the fearful hour.”

The voice ceased — the crowd breathed more freely — the merchants looked at each other — “Nothing can be more plain,” murmured Diomed; “there is to be a storm at sea, as there very often is at the beginning of autumn, but our vessels are to be saved. O beneficent Isis!”

“Lauded eternally be the goddess!” said the merchants; “what can be less equivocal than her prediction?”

Raising one hand in sign of silence to the people, for the rites of Isis enjoined what to the lively Pompeians was an impossible suspense from the use of the vocal organs, the chief priest poured his libation on the altar, and after a short concluding prayer, the ceremony was over and the congregation dismissed. Still, however, as the crowd dispersed themselves here and there, the Egyptian lingered by the railing, and when the space became tolerably cleared, one of the priests, approaching it, saluted him with great appearance of friendly familiarity.

The countenance of the priest was remarkably unprepossessing — his shaven skull was so low and narrow in the front as nearly to approach to the conformation of an African savage, save only towards the temples, where, in that organ styled acquisitiveness by the pupils of a science modern in name, but best practically known (as their sculpture teaches us) among the ancients, two huge and almost preternatural protuberances yet more distorted the unshapely head; — around the brows the skin was puckered into a web of deep and intricate wrinkles — the eyes, dark and small, rolled in a muddy and yellow orbit — the nose, short yet coarse, was distended at the nostrils like a satyr’s — and the thick but pallid lips, the high cheek-bones, the livid and motley hues that struggled through the parchment skin, completed a countenance which none could behold without repugnance, and few without terror and distrust — whatever the wishes of the mind, the animal frame was well fitted to execute them; the wiry muscles of the throat, the broad chest, the nervous hands and lean gaunt arms, which were bared above the elbow, betokened a form capable alike of great active exertion and passive endurance.

“Calenus,” said the Egyptian to this fascinating flamen, “you have im-

* See a singular picture in the Museum of Naples, of an Egyptian sacrifice.

proved the voice of the statue much by attending to my suggestion ; and your verses are excellent — always prophesy good fortune, unless there is an absolute impossibility of its fulfilment."

"Besides," added Calenus, "if the storm does come, and if it does overwhelm the accursed ships, have we not prophesied it? and are the barks not blessed to be at rest? — for rest prays the mariner in the *Ægean* Sea, or at least so says Horace; can the mariner be more at rest in the sea than when he is at the bottom of it?"

"Right, my Calenus; I wish Apæcides would take a lesson from your wisdom. But I desire to confer with you relative to him and to other matters; you can admit me into one of your less sacred apartments?"

"Assuredly," replied the priest, leading the way to one of the small chambers which surrounded the open gate. Here they seated themselves before a small table spread with dishes containing fruit and eggs, and various cold meats, with vases of excellent wine, of which, while the companions partook, a curtain drawn across the entrance opening to the court concealed them from view, but admonished them by the thinness of the partition to speak low or to speak no secrets; they chose the former alternative.

"Thou knowest," said Arbaces, in a voice that scarcely stirred the air, so soft and inward was its sound, "that it has ever been my maxim to attach myself to the young. From their flexible and unformed minds I can carve out my fittest tools. I weave — I warp — I mould them at my will. Of the men I make merely followers or servants; of the women —"

"Mistresses," said Calenus, as a livid grin distorted his ungainly features.

"Yes, I do not disguise it, woman is the main object — the great appetite of my soul. As you feed the victim for the slaughter, I love to rear the votaries of my pleasure. I love to train, to ripen their minds — to unfold the sweet blossom of their hidden passions, in order to prepare the fruit to my tastes. I loathe your ready-made and ripened courtesans; it is in the soft and unconscious progress of innocence to desire that I find the true charm of love: it is thus that I defy satiety, and by contemplating the freshness of others, I sustain the freshness of my own sensations. From the young hearts of my victims, I draw the ingredients of the caldron in which I re-youth myself. But enough of this: to the subject before us. You know, then, that in Neapolis some time since I encountered Ione and Apæcides, brother and sister, the children of Athenians who had settled at Neapolis. The death of their parents, who knew and esteemed me, constituted me their guardian. I was not unmindful of the trust. The youth, docile and mild, yielded readily to the impression I sought to stamp upon him. Next to woman I love the old recollections of my ancestral land; I love to keep alive — to propagate on distant shores (which her colonies perchance yet people) her dark and mystic creeds. It may be that it pleases me to delude mankind, while I thus serve the deities. To Apæcides I taught the solemn faith of Isis. I unfolded to him something of those sublime allegories which are couched beneath her worship. I excited in a soul peculiarly alive to religious fervour that enthusiasm which imagination begets on faith. I have placed him among you: he is one of you."

"He is so," said Calenus; "but in thus stimulating his faith you have robbed him of wisdom. He is horror-struck that he is no longer duped: our sage delusions — our speaking statues and secret staircases dismay and revolt him; he pines; he wastes away; he mutters to himself; he refuses to share our ceremonies. He has been known to frequent the company of men suspected of adherence to that new and atheistical creed which denies all our gods, and terms our oracles the inspirations of that malevolent spirit of which Eastern tradition speaks. Our oracles — alas! we know well whose inspirations they are!"

"This is what I feared," said Arbaces, musingly, "from various reproaches he made me when I last saw him. Of late he hath shunned my steps: I must find him: I must continue my lessons: I must lead him into the Adytus of wisdom. I must teach him that there are two stages of sanctity — the first FAITH; the next DELUSION; the one for the vulgar, the second for the sage."

"I never passed through the first," said Calenus; "nor you either, I think, my Arbaces."

"You err," replied the Egyptian, gravely. "I believe, at this day (not indeed that which I teach, but that which I teach not,) Nature has a sanctity against which I cannot (nor would I) steel conviction. I believe in mine own knowledge, and that has revealed to me — but no matter! Now to earthlier and more inviting themes. If I thus fulfilled my object with Apæcides, what was my design for Ione? Thou knowest already I intend her for my queen — my bride — my heart's Isia. Never till I saw her knew I all the love of which my nature was capable."

"I hear from a thousand lips that she is a second Helen," said Calenus, and he smacked his own lips; but whether at the wine or at the notion it is not easy to decide.

"Yes, she has a beauty that Greece itself never excelled," resumed Arbaces. "But that is not all; she has a soul worthy to match with mine. She has a genius beyond that of woman — keen — dazzling — bold. Poetry flows spontaneous to her lips: utter but a truth, and, however intricate and profound, her mind seizes and commands it. Her imagination and her reason are not at war with each other; they harmonize and direct her course, as the winds and the waves direct some lofty bark. With this she unites a daring independence of thought: she can stand alone in the world; she can be brave as she is gentle: this is the nature I have sought all my life in woman, and never found till now. Ione must be mine! In her I have a double passion; I wish to enjoy a beauty of spirit as of form."

"She is not yours yet, then," said the priest.

"No: she loves me — but as a friend: she loves me with her mind only. She fancies in me the paltry virtues which I have only the profounder virtue to disdain. But you must pursue with me her history. The brother and sister were young and rich: Ione is proud and ambitious — proud of her genius — the magic of her poetry — the charm of her conversation. When her brother left me, and entered your temple, in order to be near him she removed also to Pompeii. She has suffered her talents to be known. She summons crowds to her feasts; her voice enchants them; her poetry subdues. She delights in being thought the successor of Erinna."

"Or of Sappho?"

"But Sappho without love! I encouraged her in this boldness of career — in this indulgence of vanity and of pleasure — I loved to steep her amid the dissipations and luxury of this abandoned city. Mark me, Calenus! I desired to enervate her mind! — it has been too pure to receive yet the breath which I wish not to pass, but burningly to eat into, the crystal mirror. I wished her to be surrounded by lovers, hollow, vain, and frivolous, (lovers that her nature must despise,) in order to feel the want of love. Then, in those soft intervals of lassitude that succeed to excitement, I can weave my spells — excite her interest — attract her passions — possess myself of her heart. For it is not the young, nor the beautiful, nor the gay that alone can fascinate Ione; her imagination must be won; and the life of Arbaces has been one scene of triumph over the imaginations of his kind."

"And hast thou no fear, then, of thy rivals? The gallants of Italy are skilled in the art to please."

"None! — her Greek soul despises the barbarian Romans, and would scorn itself if it admitted a thought of love for one of that upstart race."

"But thou art an Egyptian, not a Greek!"

"Egypt," replied Arbaces, "is the mother of Athens. Her tutelary Minerva is our deity; and her founder Cecrops was the the fugitive of Egyptian Sais. This have I already taught to her; and in my blood she venerates the eldest dynasties of earth. But yet I will own that of late some uneasy suspicions have crossed my mind. She is more silent than she used to be; she loves melancholy and subduing music; she sighs without an outward cause. This may be the beginning of love—it may be the want of love. In either case it is time for me to begin my operations on her fancies and her heart: in the one case, to divert the source of love to me; in the other, in me to awaken it. It is for this that I have sought you."

"And how can I assist you?"

"I am about to invite her to a feast in my house: I wish to dazzle—to bewilder—to inflame her senses. Our arts, the arts by which Egypt trained her young novitiates, must be employed; and under veil of the mysteries of religion, I will open to her the secrets of love."

"Ah! now I understand: one of these voluptuous banquets that, despite our dull vows of mortified coldness, we thy priests of Isis, have shared at thy house."

"No, no! Thinkest thou her chaste eyes are ripe for such scenes? No: but first we must insnare the brother—an easier task. Listen to me, while I give you my instructions."

CHAPTER V.

MORE OF THE FLOWER-GIRL—THE PROGRESS OF LOVE.

THE sun shone gayly into that beautiful chamber in the house of Glaucus which I have before said is now called "the room of Leda." The morning rays entered through rows of small casements at the higher part of the room, and through the door which opened on the garden, that answered to the inhabitants of the southern cities the same purpose that a greenhouse or conservatory does to us. The size of the garden did not adapt it for exercise, but the various and fragrant plants with which it was filled gave a luxury to that indolence so dear to the dwellers in a sunny clime. And now the odours, fanned by a gentle wind creeping from the adjacent sea, scattered themselves over that chamber whose walls vied with the richest colours of the most glowing flowers. Besides the gem of the room—the painting of Leda and Tyndareus, in the centre of each compartment of the walls were set other pictures of exquisite beauty. In one you saw Cupid leaning on the knees of Venus; in another, Ariadne sleeping on the beach, unconscious of the perfidy of Theseus. Merrily the sunbeams played to and fro on the tessellated floor and the brilliant walls—far more happily came the rays of joy to the heart of the young Glaucus.

"I have seen her, then," said he, as he paced that narrow chamber; "I have heard her—nay, I have spoken to her again—I have listened to the music of her song, and she sung of glory and of Greece. I have discovered the long-sought idol of my dreams; and, like the Cyprian sculptor, I have breathed life into my own imaginings."

Longer, perhaps, had been the enamoured soliloquy of Glaucus, but at that moment a shadow darkened the threshold of the chamber, and a young female, still half a child in years, broke upon his solitude. She was dressed simply in a white tunic, which reached from the neck to the ankles;

under her arm she bore a basket of flowers, and in the other hand she held a bronze water vase; her features were more formed than exactly became her years, yet they were soft and feminine in their outline, and without being beautiful in themselves they were almost made so by their beauty of expression; there was something ineffably gentle, and you would say patient, in her aspect—a look of resigned sorrow, of tranquil endurance, had banished the smile, but not the sweetness, from her lips; something timid and cautious in her step—something wandering in her eyes, led you to suspect the affliction which she had suffered from her birth—she was blind; but in the orbs themselves there was no visible defect, their melancholy and subdued light was clear, cloudless, and serene. “They tell me that Glaucus is here,” said she; “may I come in?”

“Ah, my Nydia,” said the Greek, “is that you? I knew you would not neglect my invitation.”

“Glaucus did but justice to himself,” answered Nydia, with a blush, “for he has always been kind to the poor blind girl.”

“Who could be otherwise?” said Glaucus, tenderly, and in the voice of a compassionate brother.

Nydia sighed and paused before she resumed, without replying to his remark. “You have but lately returned? This is the sixth sun that hath shone upon me at Pompeii. And you are well? Ah, I need not ask—for who that sees the earth which they tell me is so beautiful can be ill?”

“I am well—and you, Nydia?—how you have grown! next year you will be thinking of what answer we shall make your lovers.”

A second blush passed over the cheek of Nydia, but this time she frowned as she blushed. “I have brought you some flowers,” said she, without replying to a remark she seemed to resent, and feeling about the room till she found the table that stood by Glaucus, she laid the basket upon it: “they are poor, but they are fresh gathered.”

“They might come from Flora herself,” said he, kindly; “and I renew again my vow to the Graces that I will wear no other garlands while thy hands can weave me such as these.”

“And how find you the flowers in your viridarium?—are they thriving?”

“Wonderfully so—the Lares themselves must have tended them.”

“Ah, now you give me pleasure; for I came, as often as I could steal the leisure, to water and tend them in your absence.”

“How shall I thank thee, fair Nydia?” said the Greek. “Glaucus little dreamed that he left one memory so watchful over his favourites at Pompeii.”

The hand of the child trembled, and her breast heaved beneath her tunic. She turned round in embarrassment. “The sun is hot for the poor flowers,” said she, “to-day, and they will miss me, for I have been ill lately, and it is nine days since I visited them.”

“Ill, Nydia! yet your cheek has more colour than it had last year.”

“I am often ailing,” said the blind girl, touchingly, “and as I grow up I grieve more that I am blind. But now to the flowers!” So saying, she made a slight reverence with her head, and passing into the viridarium, busied herself with watering the flowers.

“Poor Nydia,” thought Glaucus, gazing on her, “thine is a hard doom. Thou seest not the earth—nor the sun—nor the ocean—nor the stars—above all, thou canst not behold Ione.”

At that last thought his mind flew back to the past evening, and was a second time disturbed in its reveries by the entrance of Clodius. It was a remarkable thing, and a proof how much a single evening had sufficed to increase and to refine the love of the Athenian for Ione, that whereas he had confided to Clodius the secret of his first interview with her, and the

effect it had produced on him, he now felt an invincible aversion even to mention to him her name. He had seen Ione bright, pure, unsullied in the midst of the gayest and most profligate gallants of Pompeii, charming rather than awing the boldest into respect, and changing the very nature of the most sensual and the least ideal as by her intellectual and refining spells;—she reversed the fable of Circe, and converted the animals into men. They who could not understand her soul were etherealized, as it were, by the magic of her beauty—they who had no heart for poetry had ears at least for the melody of her voice. Seeing her thus surrounded, purifying and brightening all things with her presence, Glaucus almost for the first time felt that of which his own nature was capable,—he felt how unworthy of the goddess of his dreams had been his companions and his pursuits. A veil seemed lifted from his eyes, he saw that immeasurable distance between himself and his associates which the deceiving mists of pleasure had hitherto concealed; he was refined by a sense of his courage in aspiring to Ione. He felt that henceforth it was his destiny to look upward and to soar. He could no longer breathe that name, which sounded to the sense of his ardent fancy as something sacred and divine, to lewd and vulgar ears. She was no longer the beautiful girl once seen and passionately remembered—she was already the mistress, the divinity of his soul. This feeling who has not experienced?—if thou hast not, then thou hast never loved!

When Clodius therefore spoke to him in affected transports of the beauty of Ione, Glaucus felt only resentment and disgust that such lips should dare to praise her; he answered coldly, and the Roman imagined that his passion was cured instead of heightened. Clodius scarcely regretted it, for he was anxious that Glaucus should marry an heiress yet more richly endowed—Julia, the daughter of the wealthy Diomed, whose gold the gamester imagined he could readily divert into his own coffers. Their conversation did not flow with its usual ease, and no sooner had Clodius left him than Glaucus bent his way to the house of Ione. In passing by the threshold he again encountered Nydia, who had finished her graceful task. She knew his step on the instant.

"You are early abroad," said she.

"Yes; for the skies of Campania rebuke the sluggard who neglects them.

"Ah, would I could see them!" murmured the blind girl, but so low that Glaucus did not overhear the complaint.

The Thessalian lingered on the threshold a few moments, and then guiding her steps by a long staff, which she used with great dexterity, she took her way homeward. She soon turned from the more gaudy streets, and entered a quarter of the town but little loved by the decorous and the sober. But from the low and rude evidences of vice around her she was saved by her misfortune. And at that hour the streets were quiet and silent, nor was her youthful ear shocked by the sounds which too often broke along the obscene and obscure haunts she patiently and sadly traversed.

She knocked at the back-door of a sort of tavern; it opened, and a rude voice bade her give an account of the sesterces. Ere she could reply, another voice less vulgarly accented said,

"Never mine those petty profits, my Burbo. The girl's voice will be wanted again soon at our rich friend's revels; and he pays, as thou knowest, pretty high for his nightingale's tongues."

"Oh, I hope not—I trust not," cried Nydia, trembling; "I will beg from sunrise to sunset, but send me not there."

"And why?" asked the same voice.

"Because—because I am young, and delicately born, and the female companions I meet there are not fit associates for one who—who—who—"

"Is a slave in the house of Burbo," returned the voice, ironically, and with a coarse laugh.

The Thessalian put down the flowers, and leaning her face on her hands, wept silently.

Meanwhile, Glaucus sought the house of the beautiful Neapolitan. He found Ione sitting amid her attendants, who were at work around her. Her harp stood at her side, for Ione herself was unusually idle, perhaps unusually thoughtful, that day. He thought her even more beautiful by the morning light, and in her simple robe, than amid the blazing lamps, and decorated with the costly jewels of the previous night; not the less so from a certain paleness that overspread her transparent hues, not the less so from the blush that mounted over them when he approached. Accustomed to flatter, flattery died upon his lips when he addressed Ione. He felt it beneath her to utter the homage which every look conveyed. They spoke of Greece; this was a theme on which Ione loved rather to listen than to converse; it was a theme on which the Greek could have been eloquent for ever. He described to her the silver groves that yet clad the banks of Ilyssus, and the temples, already despoiled of half their glories — but how beautiful in decay! He looked back on the melancholy city of Harmodius the free and Pericles the magnificent, from the height of that distant memory in which all the ruder and darker shades were mellowed into light. He had seen the land of poetry chiefly in the poetical age of early youth; and the associations of patriotism were blended with those of the flush and spring of life. And Ione listened to him, absorbed and mute; dearer were those accents, and those descriptions, than all the prodigal adulation of her numberless adorers. Was it a sin to love her countrymen! she loved Athens, in him — the gods of her race, the land of her dreams, spoke to her in his voice! From that time they daily saw each other. At the cool of the evening they made excursions on the placid sea. By night they met again in Ione's porticoes and halls. Their love was sudden, but it was strong; it filled all the sources of their life. Heart — brain — sense — imagination, all were its ministers and priests. As you take some obstacle from two objects that have a mutual attraction, they met, and united at once; their wonder was that they had lived separate so long: and it was natural that they should so love. Young, beautiful, and gifted — of the same birth, and the same souls; there was poetry in their very union. They imagined the heavens smiled upon their affection. As the persecuted seek refuge at the shrine, so they recognised in the altar of their love an asylum from the sorrows of earth; they covered it with flowers — they knew not of the serpents that lay coiled behind.

One evening, the fifth after their first meeting at Pompeii, Glaucus and Ione, with a small party of chosen friends, were returning from an excursion round the bay; their vessel skimmed lightly over the twilight waters, whose lucid mirror was only broken by the dripping oars. As the rest of the party conversed gayly with each other, Glaucus lay at the feet of Ione, and he would have looked up in her face, but he did not dare. Ione broke the pause between them.

"My poor brother," said she, sighing, "how once he would have enjoyed this hour!"

"Your brother!" said Glaucus, "I have not seen him. Occupied with you, I have thought of nothing else, or I should have asked if that was not your brother for whose companionship you left me at the Temple of Minerva, in Neapolis."

"It was."

"And is he here?"

"He is—"

"At Pompeii, and not constantly with you ! impossible ?"

"He has other duties," answered Ione, sadly : "he is a priest of Isis."

"So young, too, and that priesthood, in its laws at least, so severe !" said the warm and bright-hearted Greek, in surprise and pity. "What could have been his inducement ?"

"He was always enthusiastic and fervent in religious devotion ; and the eloquence of an Egyptian — our friend and guardian — kindled in him the pious desire to consecrate his life to the most mystic of our deities. Perhaps, in the intenseness of his zeal, he found in the severity of that peculiar priesthood its peculiar attraction."

"And he does not repent his choice ? — I trust he is happy ?"

Ione sighed deeply, and lowered her veil over her eyes.

"I wish," said she, after a pause, "that he had not been so hasty. Perhaps, like all who expect too much, he is revolted too easily !"

"Then he is not happy in his new condition — and this Egyptian, was he a priest himself ? was he interested in recruits to the sacred band ?"

"No. His main interest was in our happiness. He thought he promoted that of my brother. We were left orphans."

"Like myself," said Glaucus, with a deep meaning in his voice.

Ione cast down her eyes as she resumed —

"And Arbaces sought to supply the place of our parent. You must know him. He loves genius."

"Arbaces ! I know him already ; at least we speak when we meet : but for your praise, I would not seek to know more of him. My heart inclines readily to most of my kind, but that dark Egyptian, with his gloomy brow and icy smile, seems to me to sadden the very sun. One would think that, like Epimenides the Cretan, he had spent forty years in a cave, and had found something unnatural in the daylight ever afterward."

"Yet, like Epimenides, he is kind, and wise, and gentle," answered Ione.

"Oh, happy that he has thy praise ! He needs no other virtues to make him dear to me."

"His calm, his coldness," said Ione, evasively pursuing the subject, "are perhaps, but the exhaustion of past sufferings, as yonder mountain" (and she pointed to Vesuvius) "which we see, dark and tranquil in the distance, once nourished the fires for ever quenched."

They both gazed on the mountain as Ione said these words ; the rest of the sky was bathed in rosy and tender hues, — but over that gray summit, rising amid the woods and vineyards that then clomb half-way up the ascent, there hung a black and ominous cloud, the single frown of the landscape. A sudden and unaccountable gloom came over each as they thus gazed, and in that sympathy which love had already taught them, and which bade them in the slightest shadows of emotion, the faintest presentiment of evil, turn for refuge to each other, their gaze at the same moment left the mountain, and full of unimaginable tenderness met. What need had they of words to say they loved !

CHAPTER VI.

THE FOWLER SNARES AGAIN THE BIRD THAT HAD JUST ESCAPED, AND SETS HIS NET FOR A NEW VICTIM.

IN the history I relate, the events are crowded and rapid as those of the drama. I write of an epoch in which days sufficed to ripen the ordinary fruits of years.

Meanwhile, Arbaces had not of late much frequented the house of Ione, and when he had visited her, he had not encountered Glaucus, nor knew he as yet of that love which had so suddenly sprung up between himself and his designs. In his interest for the brother of Ione he had been forced too, a little while, to suspend his interest in Ione herself. His pride and his selfishness were aroused and alarmed at the sudden change which had come over the spirit of the youth. He trembled lest himself should lose a docile pupil, and Isis an enthusiastic servant. Apæcides had ceased to seek or to consult him. He was rarely to be found; he turned sullenly from the Egyptian, nay, he fled when he perceived him in the distance. Arbaces was one of those haughty and powerful spirits accustomed to master others; he chafed at the notion that one once his own should ever elude his grasp. He swore inly that Apæcides should not escape him.

It was with this resolution that he passed through a thick grove in the city which lay between his house and that of Ione, in his way to the latter; and there, leaning against a tree and gazing on the ground, he came un-
aware on the young priest of Isis.

"Apæcides," said he, and he laid his hand affectionately on the young man's shoulder.

The priest started, and his first instinct seemed to be that of flight. "My son," said the Egyptian, "what has chanced that you desire to shun me?"

Apæcides remained silent and sullen, looking down on the earth, as his lips quivered, and his breast heaved with emotion.

"Speak to me, my friend," continued the Egyptian, — "speak. Something burdens thy spirit. What hast thou to reveal?"

"To thee — nothing."

"And why is it to me thou art thus unconfidential?"

"Because thou hast been my enemy."

"Let us confer," said Arbaces in a low voice; and drawing the reluctant arm of the priest in his own, he led him to one of the seats which were scattered within the grove. They sat down, and in those gloomy forms there was something congenial to the shade and solitude of the place.

Apæcides was in the spring of his years, yet he seemed to have exhausted even more of life than the Egyptian — his delicate and regular features were worn and colourless — his eyes were hollow, and shone with a brilliant and feverish glare — his frame bowed prematurely, and in his hands, which were small to effeminacy, the blue and swollen veins indicated the lassitude and weakness of the relaxed fibres — you saw in his face a strong resemblance to Ione, but the expression was altogether different from that majestic and spiritual calm which breathed so divine and classical a repose over his sister's beauty. In her, enthusiasm was visible, but it seemed always suppressed and restrained; this made the charm and sentiment of her countenance; you longed to awaken a spirit which reposed, but evidently did not sleep. In Apæcides the whole aspect betokened the fervour and passion of his temperament, and the intellectual portion of his nature seemed, by the wild fire of the eyes — the great breadth of the temples, when compared

with the height of the brow — the trembling restlessness of the lips — to be swayed and tyrannized over by the imaginative and ideal. Fancy, with the sister, had stopped short at the golden goal of poetry; with the brother, less happy and less restrained, it had wandered into visions more intangible and unembodied; and the faculties which gave genius to the one threatened madness to the other.

"You say I have been your enemy," said Arbaces; "I know the cause of that unjust accusation. I have placed you amid the priests of Isis — you are revolted at their trickeries and imposture — you think that I too have deceived you — the purity of your mind is offended — you imagine that I am one of the deceitful —"

"You knew the jugglings of that impious craft," answered Apœcides; "why did you disguise them from me? When you excited my desire to devote myself to the office whose garb I bear, you spoke to me of the holy life of men resigning themselves to knowledge — you have given me for companions an ignorant and sensual herd, who have no knowledge but that of the grossest frauds; you spoke to me of men sacrificing the earthlier pleasures to the sublime cultivation of virtue — you place me among men reeking with all the filthiness of vice; you spoke to me of the friends, the enlighteners of our common kind — I see but their cheats and deluders! Oh, it was basely done! — you have robbed me of the glory of youth, of the convictions of virtue, of the sanctifying thirst after wisdom — young as I was, rich, fervent, the sunny pleasures of earth before me, I resigned all without a sigh, nay, with happiness and exultation in the thought that I resigned them for the abstruse mysteries of diviner wisdom, for the companionship of gods — for the revelations of heaven — and now — now —"

Convulsive sobs checked the priest's voice; he covered his face with his hands, and large tears forced themselves through the wasted fingers and ran profusely down his vest.

"What I promised to thee, that will I give, my friend, my pupil; these have been but trials to thy virtue — it comes forth the brighter for thy novitiate; think no more of those dull cheats — assort no more with those menials of the goddess, the *atrienses** of her hall — you are worthy to enter into the penetralia; I henceforth will be your priest, your guide, and you who now curse my friendship shall live to bless it!"

The young man lifted up his head, and gazed with a vacant and wondering stare upon the Egyptian.

"Listen to me," continued Arbaces, in an earnest and solemn voice, casting first his searching eyes around to see that they were still alone. "From Egypt came all the knowledge of the world; from Egypt came the lore of Athens, and the profound policy of Crete; from Egypt came those early and mysterious tribes which (long before the hordes of Romulus swept over the plains of Italy, and in the eternal cycle of events drove back civilization into barbarism and darkness) possessed all the arts of wisdom and the graces of intellectual life. From Egypt came the rites and the grandeur of that solemn Cære, whose inhabitants taught their iron vanquishers of Rome all that they yet know of elevated in religion and sublime in worship. And how deemest thou, young man, that that dread Egypt, the mother of countless nations, achieved her greatness, and soared to her cloud-capped eminence of wisdom? — it was the result of a profound and holy policy. Your modern nations owe their greatness to Egypt — Egypt her greatness to her priests. Rapt in themselves, coveting a sway over the nobler part of man, his soul and his belief, these ancient ministers of God were inspired with the grandest thought that ever occurred to mortals. From the revolutions of the stars, from the seasons of the earth, from the round and unvary-

* The slaves who had the care of the atrium

ing circle of human destinies, they devised an august allegory ; they made it gross and palpable to the vulgar by the signs of gods and goddesses, and that which in reality was Government they named Religion. Isis is a fable — start not — that for which Isis is a type is a reality, an immortal being ; Isis is nothing ; Nature, which she represents, is the mother of all things ; dark, ancient, inscrutable, save to the gifted few. ‘None among mortals hath ever taken off my veil,’ so saith the Isis that you adore ; but to the wise that veil *hath* been removed, and we have stood face to face with the solemn loveliness of Nature. The priests then were the benefactors, the civilizers of mankind, true, they were also cheats, impostors if you will. But think you, young man, that if they had not deceived their kind they could have served them ? The ignorant and servile vulgar must be blinded to attain to their proper good ; they would not believe a maxim — they revere an oracle. The Emperor of Rome sways the vast and various tribes of earth, and harmonizes the conflicting and disunited elements ; thence come peace, order, law, the blessings of life. Think you it is the man, the emperor, that thus sways ? — no, it is the pomp, the awe, the majesty that surround him — *these* are his impostures, his delusions ; our oracles and our divinations, our rites and our ceremonies, are the means of *our* sovereignty and the engines of *our* power. They are the same means to the same end, the welfare and harmony of mankind — you listen to me rapt and intent — the light begins to dawn upon you.”

Apæcides remained silent, but the changes rapidly passing over his speaking countenance betrayed the effect produced upon him by the words of the Egyptian — words made tenfold more eloquent by the voice, the aspect, and the manner of the man.

“While, then,” resumed Arbaces, “our fathers of the Nile thus achieved the first elements by whose life chaos is destroyed, namely, the obedience and reverence of the multitude for the few, they drew from their majestic and starred meditations that wisdom which was *no* delusion : they invented the codes and regularities of law — the arts and glories of existence. They asked belief ; they returned the gift by civilization. Were not their very cheats a virtue ? Trust me, whosoever in yon fair heavens of a diviner and more beneficent nature look down upon our world, smile approvingly upon the wisdom which has worked such ends. But you wish me to apply these generalities to yourself ; I hasten to obey the wish. The altars of the goddess of our ancient faith must be served, and served not only by the stolid and soulless things that are but as pegs and hooks whereon to hang the fillet and the robe. Remember two sayings of Sextus the Pythagorean, sayings borrowed from the lore of Egypt. The first is, ‘Speak not of God to the multitude ;’ the second is, ‘The man worthy of God is a god among men.’ As Genius gave to the ministers of Egyptian worship that empire in late ages so fearfully decayed, thus by Genius only can the dominion be restored. I saw in you, Apæcides, a pupil worthy of my lessons — a minister worthy of the great ends which may yet be wrought : your energy, your talents, your purity of faith, your earnestness of enthusiasm, all fitted you for that calling which demands so imperiously high and ardent qualities : I fanned therefore your sacred desires ; I stimulated you to the step you have taken. But you blame me that I did not reveal to you the little souls and the juggling tricks of your companions. Had I done so, Apæcides, I had defeated my own object : your noble nature would have at once revolted, and Isis would have lost her priest.”

Apæcides groaned aloud. The Egyptian continued, without heeding the interruption.

“I placed you, therefore, without preparation, in the temple ; I left you suddenly to discover and to be sickened by all those mummeries which dazzled the herd. I desired that you should perceive how those engines are

moved by which the fountain that refreshes the world casts its waters in the air. It was the trial ordained of old to all our priests. Those who accustom themselves to the impostures of the vulgar are left to practise them; for those like you, whose higher natures demand higher pursuit, religion opens more godlike secrets. I am pleased to find in you the character I had expected. You have taken the vows; you cannot recede. Advance—I will be your guide.”

“And what wilt thou teach me, O singular and fearful man? New cheats—new—”

“No—I have thrown thee into the abyss of Disbelief; I will lead thee now to the eminence of Faith. Thou hast seen the false types; thou shalt learn now the realities they represent. There is no shadow, Apæcides, without its substance. Come to me this night. Your hand.”

Impressed, excited, bewildered by the language of the Egyptian, Apæcides gave him his hand, and master and pupil parted.

It was true that for Apæcides there was no retreat. He had taken the vows of celibacy; he had devoted himself to a life that at present seemed to possess all the austerities of fanaticism, without the consolations of belief.

It was natural that he should yet cling to a yearning desire to reconcile himself to an irrevocable career. The powerful and profound mind of the Egyptian yet claimed an empire over his young imagination; excited him with vague conjecture, and kept him alternately vibrating between hope and fear.

Meanwhile Arbaces pursued his slow and stately way to the house of Ione. As he entered the tablinum, he heard a voice from the porticoes of the peristyle beyond, which, musical as it was, sounded displeasingly on his ear—it was the voice of the young and beautiful Glaucus, and for the first time an involuntary thrill of jealousy crossed the breast of the Egyptian. On entering the peristyle, he found Glaucus seated by the side of Ione. The fountain in the odorous garden cast up its silver spray in the air, and kept a delicious coolness in the midst of the sultry noon. The handmaids almost invariably attendant on Ione, who with her freedom of life preserved the most delicate modesty, sat at a little distance; by the feet of Glaucus lay the lyre on which he had been playing to Ione one of the Lesbian airs. The scene, the group before Arbaces, was stamped by that peculiar and refined ideality of poesy which we yet not erroneously imagine to be the distinction of the ancients,—the marble columns, the vases of flowers, the statue, white and tranquil, closing every vista, and above all the two living forms from which a sculptor might have caught either inspiration or despair!

Arbaces, pausing for a moment, gazed on the pair with a brow from which all the usual stern serenity had fled; he recovered himself by an effort, and slowly approached them, but with a step so soft and echoless that even the attendants heard him not; much less Ione and her lover.

“And yet,” said Glaucus, “it is only before we love that we imagine that our poets have truly described the passion—the instant the sun rises, all the stars that had shone in his absence vanish into air. The poets exist only in the night of the heart; they are nothing to us when we feel the full glory of the god.”

“A gentle and most glowing image, noble Glaucus.”

Both started, and recognised behind the seat of Ione the cold and sarcastic face of the Egyptian.

“You are a sudden guest,” said Glaucus, rising, and with a forced smile.

“So ought all to be who know they are welcome,” returned Arbaces, seating himself, and motioning to Glaucus to do the same.

“I am glad,” said Ione, “to see you at length together; for you are suited to each other, and you are formed to be friends.”

"Give me back some fifteen years of life," replied the Egyptian, "before you can place me on an equality with Glaucus. Happy should I be to receive his friendship: but what can I give him in return? Can I make to him the same confidences that he would repose in me?—of banquets and garlands—of Parthian steeds and the chances of the dice? These pleasures suit his age, his nature, his career; they are not for mine."

So saying, the artful Egyptian looked down and sighed; but from the corner of his eye he stole a glance towards Ione, to see how she received these insinuations of the pursuits of her visiter. Her countenance did not satisfy him. Glaucus, slightly colouring, hastened gayly to reply. Nor was he, perhaps, without the same wish to disconcert and abash the Egyptian.

"You are right, wise Arbaces," said he; "we can esteem each other, but we cannot be friends. My banquets lack the secret salt which, according to rumour, gives such zest to your own. And, per Hercle! when I have reached your age, if I, like you, may think it wise to pursue the pleasures of manhood, like you I shall be doubtless sarcastic on the gallantries of youth."

The Egyptian raised his eyes to Glaucus with a sudden and piercing glance.

"I do not understand you," said he, coldly, "but it is the custom to consider wit lies in obscurity." He turned as he spake from Glaucus, with a scarcely perceptible sneer of contempt, and after a moment's pause addressed himself to Ione—"I have not, beautiful Ione," said he, "been fortunate enough to find you within doors the last two or three times that I have visited your vestibule."

"The smoothness of the sea has tempted me much from home," replied Ione, with a little embarrassment.

The embarrassment did not escape Arbaces; but without seeming to heed it, he replied, with a smile, "You know the old poet says, that 'Women should keep within doors, and there converse.'"^{*}

"The poet was a cynic," said Glaucus, "and hated women."

"He spake according to the customs of his country, and that country is your boasted Greece."

"To different periods different customs. Had our forefathers known Ione, they had made a different law."

"Did you learn these pretty gallantries at Rome?" said Arbaces, with ill-suppressed emotion.

"One certainly would not go for gallantries to Egypt," retorted Glaucus, playing carelessly with his chain.

"Come, come," said Ione, hastening to interrupt a conversation which she saw, to her great distress, was so little likely to cement the intimacy she had desired to effect between Glaucus and her friend.—"Arbaces must not be so hard upon his poor pupil. An orphan and without a mother's care—I may be to blame for the independent and almost masculine liberty of life that I have chosen, yet it is not greater than the Roman women are accustomed to—it is not greater than the Grecian ought to be. Alas! is it only to be among men that freedom and virtue are to be deemed united? Why should the slavery that destroys you be considered the only method to preserve us? Ah! believe me, it has been the great error of men, and one that has worked bitterly on their destinies, to imagine that the nature of women is (I will not say inferior, that may be so, but) so different from their own, in making laws unfavourable to the intellectual advancement of women. Have they not in so doing made laws against their children whom women are to rear—against the husbands of whom women

^{*} Euripides.

are to be the friends, nay, sometimes the advisers?" Ione stopped short suddenly, and her face was suffused with the most enchanting blushes. She feared lest her enthusiasm had led her too far; yet she feared the austere Arbaces less than the courteous Glaucus, for she loved the last; and it was not the custom of the Greeks to allow their women (at least such of their women as they most honoured) the same liberty and the same station as those of Italy enjoyed. She felt, therefore, a thrill of delight as Glaucus earnestly replied —

"Ever mayst thou think thus, Ione — ever be your pure heart your unerring guide! Happy had it been for Greece if she had given to the chaste the same intellectual charms that are so celebrated among the less worthy of her woman. No state falls from freedom — from knowledge — while your sex smile only on the free, and, by appreciating, encourage the wise."

Arbaces was silent, for it was neither his part to sanction the sentiment of Glaucus nor to condemn that of Ione; and after a short and embarrassed conversation, Glaucus took his leave of Ione.

When he was gone, Arbaces, drawing his seat nearer to the fair Neapolitan's, said, in those bland and subdued tones in which he knew so well how to veil the mingled art and fierceness of his character, —

"Think not, my sweet pupil, if so I may call you, that I wish to shackle that liberty you adorn while you assume, but which, if not greater, as you rightly observe, than that possessed by the Roman women, must at least be accompanied by great circumspection, when arrogated by one unmarried. Continue to draw crowds of the gay, the brilliant, the wise themselves, to your feet — continue to charm them with the conversation of an Aspasia, the music of an Erinna — but reflect, at least, on those censorious tongues which can so easily blight the tender reputation of a maiden, and while you provoke admiration, give, I beseech you, no victory to envy."

"What mean you, Arbaces?" said Ione, in an alarmed and trembling voice; "I know you are my friend, that you desire only my honour and my welfare. What is it you would say?"

"Your friend — ah, how sincerely! May I speak then as a friend, without reserve and without offence?"

"I beseech you, do so."

"This young profligate, this Glaucus, how didst thou know him? Hast thou seen him often?" and as Arbaces spoke, he fixed his gaze steadfastly upon Ione, as if he sought to penetrate into her soul. Recoiling before that gaze, with a strange fear which she could not explain, the Greek answered with confusion and hesitation, —

"He was brought to my house as a countryman of my father's, and I may say of mine. I have known him only within this last week or so: but why these questions?"

"Forgive me," said Arbaces, "I thought you might have known him longer. Base insinuator that he is!"

"How! what mean you? Why that term?"

"It matters not: let me not rouse your indignation against one who does not deserve so grave an honour."

"I implore you, speak. What has Glaucus insinuated? or rather, in what do you suppose he has offended?"

Smothering his resentment at the last part of Ione's question, Arbaces continued, "You know his pursuits, his companions, his habits; the *comisatio* and the *alea* (the revel and the dice) make his occupation; and among the associates of vice, how can he dream of virtue?"

"Still you speak riddles. By the gods, I entreat you, say the worst at once."

"Well, then, it must be so: know, my Ione, that it was but yesterday that Glaucus boasted openly — yes, in the public baths, of your love to

him. He said it amused him to take advantage of it. Nay, I will do him justice, he praised your beauty. Who could deny it? But he laughed scornfully when his Clodius or his Lepidus asked him if he loved you enough for marriage, and when he purposed to adorn his door-pests with flowers."

"Impossible! How heard you this base slander?"

"Nay, would you have me relate to you all the comments of the insolent coxcombs with which the story has circled through the town? Be assured that I myself disbelieved at first, and that I have now painfully been convinced by several ear-witnesses of the truth of what I have reluctantly told thee."

Ione sank back, and her face was whiter than the pillar against which she leaned for support.

"I own it vexed — it irritated me, to hear your name thus lightly pitched from lip to lip, like some mere dancing girl's fame. I hastened this morning to seek and to warn you. I found Glaucus here. I was stung from my self-possession. I could not conceal my feelings; nay, I was uncourteous in thy presence. Canst thou forgive thy friend, Ione?"

Ione placed her hand in his, but replied not.

"Think no more of this," said he, "but let it be a warning voice, to tell thee how much prudence thy lot requires. It cannot hurt thee, Ione, for a moment; for a gay thing like this could never have been honoured by even a serious thought from Ione. These insults only wound when they come from one we love; far different indeed is he whom the lofty Ione shall stoop to love."

"Love!" muttered Ione, with an hysterical laugh. "Ay, indeed."

It is not without interest to observe in those remote times, and under a social system so widely different from the modern, the same small causes that ruffle and interrupt the "course of life" which operate so commonly at this day; — the same inventive jealousy, the same cunning slander, the same crafty and fabricated retailings of petty gossip which so often now suffice to break the ties of the truest love, and counteract the tenor of circumstances most apparently propitious. When the bark sails on over the smoothest wave, the fable tells us of the diminutive fish that can cling to the keel and arrest its progress: so is it ever with the great passions of mankind, and we should paint life but ill, if, even in times the most prodigal of romance, and of the romance of which we most largely avail ourselves, we did not also delineate the mechanism of those trivial and household springs of mischief which we see every day at work in our chambers and at our hearths. It is in these, the lesser intrigues of life, that we mostly find ourselves at home with the past; if you scorn them, you are *only* a romance writer — and you do not interest the heart because you do not portray it.

Most cunningly had the Egyptian appealed to Ione's ruling foible — most dexterously had he applied the poisoned dart to her pride. He fancied he had arrested what at most, he hoped, from the shortness of the time she had known Glaucus, was but an incipient fancy, and hastening to change the subject, he now led her to talk of her brother. Their conversation did not last long. He left her, resolved not again to trust so much to absence, but to visit — to watch her — every day.

No sooner had his shadow glided from her presence, than woman's pride — her sex's dissimulation — deserted his intended victim, and the haughty Ione burst into passionate tears.

CHAPTER VII.

THE GAY LIFE OF THE POMPEIAN LOUNGER—A MINIATURE LIKENESS OF THE ROMAN BATHS.

When Glaucus left Ione, he felt as if he trod upon air. In the interview with which he had just been blessed, he had for the first time gathered from her distinctly that his love was not unwelcome to, and would not be unrewarded by her. This hope filled him with a rapture for which earth and heaven seemed too narrow to afford a vent. Unconscious of the sudden enemy he had left behind, and forgetting not only his taunts but his very existence, Glaucus passed through the gay streets, repeating to himself, in the wantonness of joy, the music of the soft air to which Ione had listened with such intentness; and now he entered the street of Fortune, with its raised footpath—its houses painted without, and the open doors admitting the view of the glowing frescoes within. Each end of the street was adorned with a triumphal arch; and as Glaucus now came before the temple of Fortune, the jutting portico of that beautiful fane, which is supposed to have been built by one of the family of Cicero, perhaps by the orator himself, imparted a dignified and venerable feature to a scene otherwise more brilliant than lofty in its character. That temple was one of the most graceful specimens of Roman architecture. It was raised on a somewhat lofty podium, and between two flights of steps ascending to a platform stood the altar of the goddess. From this platform another flight of broad stairs led to the portico, from the height of whose fluted columns hung festoons of the richest flowers. On either side the extremities of the temple were placed statues of Grecian workmanship; and at a little distance from the temple rose the triumphal arch crowned with an equestrian statue of Caligula, which was flanked by trophies of bronze. In the space before the temple a lively throng were assembled—some seated on benches, and discussing the politics of the empire; some conversing on the approaching spectacle of the amphitheatre. One lot of young men were lauding a new beauty, another discussing the merits of the last play; a third group, more stricken in age, were speculating on the chance of the trade with Alexandria, and amid these were many merchants in the Eastern costume, whose loose and peculiar robes, painted and gemmed slippers, and composed and serious countenances formed a striking contrast to the tunicked forms and animated gestures of the Italians. For that impatient and lively people had, as now, a language distinct from speech—a language of signs and motions inexpressibly significant and vivacious: their descendants retain it, and the learned Iorio hath written a most entertaining work upon that species of hieroglyphical gesticulation.

Sauntering through the crowd, Glaucus soon found himself amid a group of his merry and dissipated friends.

"Ah," said Sallust, "it is a lustrum since I saw you."

"And how have you spent the lustrum? What new dishes have you discovered?"

"I have been scientific," returned Sallust, "and have made some experiments in the feeding of lampreys; I confess I despair of bringing them to the perfection which our Roman ancestors attained."

"Miserable man! and why?"

"Because," returned Sallust, with a sigh, "it is no longer lawful to give them a slave to eat. I am very often tempted to make away with a very fat carptor (butler) that I possess, and pop him slyly into the reservoir. He

would give the fish a most oleaginous flavour! But slaves are not slaves now-a-days, and have no sympathy with their master's interest — or Davus would destroy himself to oblige me!"

"What news from Rome?" said Lepidus, as he languidly joined the group.

"The Emperor has been giving a splendid supper to the senators," answered Sallust.

"He is a good creature," quoth Lepidus; "they say he never sends a man away without granting his request."

"Perhaps he would let me kill a slave for my reservoir," returned Sallust, eagerly.

"Not unlikely," said Glaucus, "for he who grants a favour to one Roman must always do it at the expense of another. Be sure that for every smile Titus has caused, a hundred eyes have wept."

"Long live Titus!" cried Pansa, overhearing the emperor's name, as he swept patronisingly through the crowd; "he has promised my brother a questorship, because he had run through his fortune."

"And wishes now to enrich himself among the people, my Pansa," said Glaucus.

"Exactly so," said Pansa.

"That is putting the people to some use," said Glaucus.

"To be sure," returned Pansa. "Well, I must go and look after the *Ærarium* — it is a little out of repair;" and followed by a long train of clients, distinguished from the rest of the throng by the togas they wore (for togas, once the sign of freedom in a citizen, were now the badge of servility to a patron,) the edile fidgeted fussily away.

"Poor Pansa!" said Lepidus, "he never has time for pleasure. Thank Heaven, I am not an edile!"

"Ah! Glaucus! *care caput*, how are you? Gay as ever!" said Clodius, joining the group.

"Are you come to sacrifice to Fortune?" said Sallust.

"I sacrifice to her every night," returned the gamester.

"I do not doubt it. No man has made more victims!"

"Per Hercle, a biting speech!" cried Glaucus, laughing.

"The dog's letter is never out of your mouth, Sallust," said Clodius, angrily; "you are always snarling."

"I may well have the dog's letter in my mouth, since, whenever I play with you, I have the dog's throw in my hand," returned Sallust.

"Hist!" said Glaucus, taking a rose from a flower-girl, who stood beside.

"The rose is the token of silence," replied Sallust; "but I love only to see it at the supper-table."

"Talking of that, Diomed gives a grand feast this week," said Sallust; "are you invited, Glaucus?"

"Yes; I received an invitation this morning."

"And I too," said Sallust, drawing a square piece of papyrus from his girdle; "I see that he asks us an hour earlier than usual; an earnest of something sumptuous."*

"Oh! he is rich as Cæsus," said Clodius; "and his bill of fare is as long as an epic."

"Well, let us to the baths," said Glaucus: "this is the time when all the world is there; and Fulvius, whom you admire so much, is going to read us his last ode."

The young men assented readily to the proposal, and they strolled to the baths.

* The Romans, like the moderns, sent tickets of invitation, specifying the hour of the repast; which, if the intended feast was to be sumptuous, was earlier than usual.

Although the public thermæ or baths were instituted rather for the poorer citizens than the wealthy, for the last had baths in their own houses; yet, to the crowds of all ranks who resorted to them, it was a favourite place for conversation, and for that idolent lounging so dear to a gay and thoughtless people. The baths at Pompeii differed, of course, in plan and construction from the vast and complicated thermæ of Rome; and, indeed, it seems that in each city of the empire there was always some slight modification of arrangement in the general architecture of the public baths. This mightily puzzles the learned — as if architects and fashion were not capricious before the nineteenth century! Our party entered by the principal porch in the street of Fortune. At the wing of the portico sat the keeper of the baths, with his two boxes before him, one for the money he received, one for the tickets he dispensed. Round the walls of the portico were seats crowded with persons of all ranks; while others, as the regimen of the physicians prescribed, were walking briskly to and fro the portico, stopping every now and then to gaze on the innumerable notices of shows, games, sales, exhibitions, which were painted or inscribed upon the walls. The general subject of conversation was, however, the spectacle announced in the amphitheatre; and each new comer was fastened upon by a group, eager to know if Pompeii had been so fortunate as to produce some monstrous criminal, some happy case of sacrilege or of murder, which would allow the ediles to provide a man for the jaws of the lion: all other more common exhibitions seemed dull and tame when compared with the possibility of this fortunate occurrence.

"For my part," said one jolly-looking man, who was a goldsmith, "I think the emperor, if he is as good as they say, might have sent us a Jew."

"Why not take one of the new sect of Nazarenes?" said a philosopher: "I am not cruel — but an atheist, one who denies Jupiter himself, deserves no mercy."

"I care not how many gods a man likes to believe in," said the jeweller, "but to deny all gods is something monstrous."

"Yet I fancy," said Glaucus, "that these people are not absolutely atheists. I am told that they believe in a God — nay, in a future state."

"Quite a mistake, my dear Glaucus," said the philosopher; "I have conferred with them — they laughed in my face when I talked of Pluto and Hades."

"O ye gods!" exclaimed the goldsmith in horror, "are there any of these wretches in Pompeii?"

"I know there are a few — but they meet so privately that it is impossible to discover who they are."

As Glaucus turned away, a sculptor, who was a great enthusiast in his art, looked after him admiringly.

"Ah!" said he, "if we could get him on the arena — there would be a model for you! What limbs! what a head! he ought to have been a gladiator! A subject — a subject — worthy of our art! Why don't they give him to the lion?"

Meanwhile Fulvius, the Roman poet, whom his contemporaries declared immortal, and who, but for this history, would never have been heard of in our neglectful age, came eagerly up to Glaucus, "Oh, my Athenian, my Glaucus, you have come to hear my ode. That is indeed an honour: you a Greek — to whom the very language of common life is poetry. How I thank you! It is but a trifle; but if I secure your approbation — perhaps I may get an introduction to Titus. O, Glaucus! a poet without a patron is an amphora without a label; the wine may be good, but nobody will laud it! And what says Pythagoras? 'Frankincense to the gods, — but praise to man.' A patron, then, is the poet's priest; he procures him the incense, and obtains him his believers."

"But all Pompeii is your patron, and every portico an altar in your praise."

"Ah! the poor Pompeians are very civil — they love to honour merit. But they are only the inhabitants of a petty town — Spero meliora! shall we within?"

"Certainly; we lose time till we hear your poem."

At this instant there was a rush of some twenty persons from the baths into the portico; and a slave stationed at the door of a small corridor now admitted the poet, Glaucus, Clodius, and a troop of the bard's other friends, into the passage.

"A poor place this compared with the Roman thermæ!" said Lepidus, disdainfully.

"Yet there is some taste in the ceiling," said Glaucus, who was in a mood to be pleased with every thing, pointing to the stars which studded the roof.

Lepidus shrugged his shoulders, but was too languid to reply.

They now entered a somewhat spacious chamber, which served for the purposes of the apoditerium (that is, a place where the bathers prepared themselves for their luxuriant ablutions.) The vaulted ceiling was raised from a cornice glowingly coloured with motley and grotesque paintings; the ceiling itself was pannelled in white compartments bordered with rich crimson; the unsullied and shining floor was paved with white mosaics, and along the walls were ranged benches for the accommodation of the loiterers. This chamber did not possess the numerous and spacious windows which Vitruvius attributes to his more magnificent *Frigidarium*. The Pompeians, as all the southern Italians, were fond of banishing the light of their sultry skies, and combined in their voluptuous associations the idea of luxury with darkness. Two windows of glass* alone admitted the soft and shaded ray; and the compartment in which one of these casements was placed was adorned with a large relief of the destruction of the Titans.

In this apartment Fulvius seated himself with a magisterial air, and his audience, gathering round him, encouraged him to commence his recital.

The poet did not require much pressing. He drew forth from his vest a roll of papyrus, and after hemming three times, as much to command silence as to clear his voice, he began that wonderful ode, of which, to the great mortification of the author of this history, no single verse can be discovered.

By the plaudits he received, it was doubtless worthy of his fame; and Glaucus was the only listener who did not find it excel the best odes of Horace.

The poem concluded, those who took only the cold bath began to undress; they suspended their garments on hooks fastened in the wall, and receiving, according to their condition, either from their own slaves or those of the thermæ, a loose robe, withdrew into that graceful and circular building, which yet exists, to shame the unlaving posterity of the south.

The more luxurious departed by another door to the tepidarium, a place which was heated to a voluptuous warmth, partly by a moveable fireplace, principally by a suspended pavement, beneath which was conducted the caloric of the Laconicum.

Here this portion of the intended bathers, after unrobing themselves, remained for some time enjoying the artificial warmth of the luxurious air. And this room, as befitted its important rank in the long process of ablution, was more richly and elaborately decorated than the rest; the arched roof was beautifully carved and painted; the windows above, of ground glass, admit-

* The discoveries at Pompeii have controverted the long established error of the antiquaries, that glass windows were unknown to the Romans — the use of them was not however common among the middle and inferior classes in their private dwellings.

ted but wandering and uncertain rays; below the massive cornices were rows of figures in massive and bold relief; the walls glowed with crimson, the pavement was skilfully tessellated in white mosaics. Here the habituated bathers, men who bathed seven times a day, would remain in a state of enervate and speechless lassitude, either before or (mostly) after the water-bath, and many of these victims of the pursuit of health turned their listless eyes on the new-comers, recognising their friends with a nod, but dreading the fatigue of conversation.

From this place the party again diverged, according to their several fancies, some to the sudatorium, which answered the purpose of our vapour-baths, and from thence to the warm-bath itself; those more accustomed to exercise, and capable of dispensing with so cheap a purchase of fatigue, resorted at once to the calidarium or water-bath.

In order to complete this sketch, and give to the reader an adequate notion of this, the main luxury of the ancients, we will accompany Lepidus, who regularly underwent the whole process, save only the cold-bath, which had gone lately out of fashion. Being then gradually warmed in the tepidarium, which has just been described, the delicate steps of the Pompeian *elegante* were conducted to the sudatorium. Here let the reader depict to himself the gradual process of the vapour-bath, accompanied by an exhalation of spicy perfumes. After our bather had undergone this operation, he was seized by his slaves, who always awaited him at the baths, and the dews of heat were removed by a kind of scraper, which, by the way, a modern traveller has gravely declared to be used only to remove the dirt, not one particle of which could ever settle on the polished skin of the practised bather. Thence, somewhat cooled, he passed into the water-bath, over which fresh perfumes were profusely scattered, and on emerging from the opposite part of the room, a cooling shower played over his head and form. Then wrapping himself in a light robe, he returned once more to the tepidarium, where he found Glaucus, who had not encountered the sudatorium; and now the main delight and extravagance of the bath commenced. Their slaves anointed the bathers from vials of gold, of alabaster, or of crystal, studded with profusest gems, and containing the rarest unguents gathered from all quarters of the world. The number of these smegmata used by the wealthy would fill a modern volume,—especially if the volume were printed by a fashionable publisher. *Amoracium megatum*, *Nardum*, — *omne quod exit in um*; while soft music played in an adjacent chamber, and such as used the bath in moderation, refreshed and restored by the grateful ceremony, conversed with all the zest and ~~freshness~~ of rejuvenated life.

“Blest be he who invented baths!” said Glaucus, stretching himself along one of those bronze seats (then covered with soft cushions) which the visiter to Pompeii sees at this day in that same tepidarium. “Whether he were Hercules or Bacchus, he deserved deification.”

“But tell me,” said a corpulent citizen, who was groaning and wheezing under the operation of being rubbed down, “tell me, O Glaucus — evil chance to thy hands, O slave, why so rough? — tell me — ugh — ugh! — are the baths at Rome really so magnificent?” Glaucus turned, and recognised Diomed, though not without some difficulty, so red and so inflamed were the good man’s cheeks, by the sudatory and the scraping he had so lately undergone. “I fancy they must be a great deal finer than these. Eh?” Suppressing a smile, Glaucus replied,

“Imagine all Pompeii converted into baths, and you would then form a notion of the size of the imperial thermæ of Rome. But a notion of the *size* only, — imagine every entertainment for mind and body — enumerate all the gymnastic games our fathers invented — repeat all the books Italy and Greece have produced — suppose places for all these games, admirers for all

these works — add to this, baths of the vastest size, the most complicated construction — intersperse the whole with gardens, with theatres, with porticoes, with schools — suppose, in one word, a city of the gods, composed but of palaces and public edifices, and you may conceive some faint idea of the glories of the great baths of Rome.”

“Per Hercle!” said Diomed, opening his eyes. “Why it would take a man’s whole life to bathe.”

“At Rome, it often does so,” replied Glaucus, gravely. “There are many who live only at the baths. They repair there the first hour in which they are opened, and remain till that in which they are closed. They seem as if they knew nothing of the rest of Rome, as if they despised all other existence.”

“Per Hercle!”

“Even those who bathe only thrice a day contrive to consume their lives in the occupation. They take their exercise in the tennis-court or the porticoes, to prepare them for the first bath; they lounge into the theatre to refresh themselves after it. They take their prandium under the trees, and think over their second bath. By the time it is prepared, the prandium is digested. From the second bath they stroll into one of the peristyles to hear some new poet recite; or into the library to sleep over an old one. Then comes the supper, which they still consider but a part of the bath; and then a third time they bathe again, as the best place to converse with their friends.”

“Per Hercle! but we have their imitators at Pompeii.”

“Yes, and without their excuse. The magnificent voluptuaries of the Roman baths are happy; they see nothing but gorgeousness and splendour, they visit not the squalid parts of the city, they know not that there is poverty in the world. All Nature smiles for them, and her only frown is the last one which sends them to bathe in Cocytus. Believe me, they are your only true philosophers.”

While Glaucus was thus conversing, Lepidus, with closed eyes and scarce perceptible breath, was undergoing all the mystic operations, not one of which he ever suffered his attendants to omit. After the perfumes and the unguents, they scattered over him the luxurious powder which prevented any further accession of heat, and this being rubbed away by the smooth surface of the pumice, he began to indue, not the garments he had put off, but those more festive ones termed “the synthesis,” with which the Romans marked their respect for the coming ceremony of supper, if rather, from its hour (three o’clock in our measurement of time), it might not be more fitly denominated dinner. This done, he at length opened his eyes and gave signs of returning life.

At the same time too Sallust betokened by a long yawn the evidence of existence.

“It is supper time,” said the epicure. “You, Glaucus and Lepidus, come and sup with me.”

“Recollect you are all three engaged to my house this week,” cried Diomed, who was mighty proud of the acquaintance of men of fashion.

“Ah, ah! we recollect,” said Sallust, “the seat of memory, my Diomed, is certainly in the stomach.”

Passing now once again into the cooler air, and so into the street, our gallants of that day concluded the ceremony of a Pompeian bath.

CHAPTER VIII.

ARBACES COGS HIS DICE WITH PLEASURE, AND WINS THE GAME.

THE evening darkened over the restless city, as Apæcides took his way to the house of the Egyptian. He avoided the more lighted and populous streets, and as he strode onward with his head buried in his bosom, and his arms folded within his robe, there was something startling in the contrast which his solemn mien and wasted form presented to the thoughtless brows and animated air of those who occasionally crossed his path.

At length, however, a man of a sober and staid demeanour, and who had twice passed him with a curious but doubting look, touched him on the shoulder.

"Apæcides," said he, and he made a rapid sign with his hands: it was the sign of the cross.

"Well, Nazarene," replied the priest, and his pale face grew paler, "what wouldst thou?"

"Nay," returned the stranger, "I would not interrupt thy meditations; but the last time we met, I seemed not to be so unwelcome."

"You are not unwelcome, Olinthus, but I am sad and weary, nor am I able this evening to discuss with you those themes which are most acceptable to you."

"O backward of heart," said Olinthus, with bitter fervour; "and art thou sad and weary, and wilt thou turn from the very springs that refresh and heal!"

"O earth," cried the young priest, striking his breast passionately, "from what regions shall my eyes open to the true Olympus, where thy gods really dwell? Am I to believe this man, that none whom for so many centuries my fathers worshipped have a being or a name? Am I to break down, as something blasphemous and profane, the very altars which I have deemed most sacred, or am I to think with Arbaces—what?"

He paused, and strode rapidly away with the impatience of a man who strives to get rid of himself.

But the Nazarene was one of those hardy, vigorous, and enthusiastic men among whom God in all times has worked the revolutions of earth, and above all, whether in the establishment—whether in the reformation—of His own religion, who were formed to convert, because formed to endure—men whom nothing discourages, nothing dismays; in the fervour of belief they are inspired, and they inspire. Their reason first kindles their passion, but the passion is the instrument they use; they force themselves into men's hearts, while they appear only to appeal to their judgment. Nothing is so contagious as enthusiasm; it is the real allegory of the tale of Orpheus—it moves stones; it charms brutes. Enthusiasm is the genius of sincerity, and truth accomplishes no victories without it.

Olinthus did not then suffer Apæcides thus easily to escape him. He overtook, and addressed him thus:—

"I do not wonder, Apæcides, that I distress you; that I shake all the elements of your mind, that you are lost in doubt, that you drift here and there in the vast ocean of uncertain and benighted thought. I wonder not at this, but bear with me a little; watch and pray, the darkness shall vanish, the storm sleep, and God himself, as He came of yore on the seas of Samaria, shall walk over the lulled billows to the delivery of your soul. Ours is a religion jealous in its demands, but how infinitely prodigal in its gifts! It troubles you for an hour, it repays you by immortality."

"Such promises," said Apæcides, sullenly, "are the tricks by which man is ever gulled. Oh, glorious were the promises which led me to the shrine of Isis!"

"But," answered the Nazarene, "ask thy reason, can that religion be sound which outrages all morality? You are told to worship your gods. What are those gods even according to yourselves? What their actions—what the attributes of their divinity? Are they not all represented to you as the blackest of criminals? yet you are asked to serve them as the holiest of divinities. Jupiter himself is a parricide and an adulterer. What are the meaner divinities, but imitators of his vices? You are told not to murder, but you worship murderers; you are told not to commit adultery, and you make your prayers to an adulterer. Oh! what is this but a mockery of the holiest part of man's nature, which is faith! Turn now to the God, the one, the true God, to whose shrine I would lead you. If he seem to you too sublime, too shadowy for those human associations, those touching connexions between Creator and creature, to which the weak heart clings—contemplate him in his Son, who put on mortality like ourselves. His mortality is not indeed declared, like that of your fabled gods, by the vices of our nature, but by the practice of all its virtues. In him are united the austere morals with the tenderest affections. If he were but a mere man, he had been worthy to become a god. You honour Socrates—he has his sect, his disciples, his schools. But what are the doubtful virtues of the Athenian, to the bright, the undisputed, the active, the unceasing, the devoted holiness of Christ! I speak to you now only of his human character. He came in that as the pattern of future ages, to show us the form of virtue which Plato thirsted to see embodied. This was the true sacrifice that He made for man; but the halo that encircled his dying hour not only brightened earth, but opened to us the sight of heaven! You are touched—you are moved. God works in your heart. His Spirit is with you. Come, resist not the holy impulse, come at once—unhesitatingly. A few of us are now assembled to expound the word of God. Come, let me guide you to them. You are sad, you are weary. Listen then to the words of God; 'Come to me,' saith He, 'all ye that are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.'"

"I cannot now," said Apæcides; "another time."

"Now—now," exclaimed Olinthus, earnestly, and clasping him by the arm.

But Apæcides, yet unprepared for the renunciation of that faith—that life for which he had sacrificed so much, and still haunted by the promises of the Egyptian, extricated himself forcibly from the grasp, and feeling an effort necessary to conquer the irresolution which the eloquence of the Christian had begun to effect in his heated and feverish mind, he gathered up his robes and fled away with a speed that defied pursuit.

Breathless and exhausted, he arrived at last in a remote and sequestered part of the city, and the lone house of the Egyptian stood before him. As he paused to recover himself, the moon emerged from a silver cloud, and shone full upon the walls of that mysterious habitation.

No other house was near; the darksome vines clustered far and wide, in front of the building, and behind it rose a copse of lofty forest-trees sleeping in the melancholy moonlight; beyond stretched the dim outline of the distant hills, and among them the quiet crest of Vesuvius, not then so lofty as the traveller beholds it now.

Apæcides passed through the arching vines, and arrived at the broad and spacious portico. Before it, on either side of the steps, reposed an image of the Egyptian sphinx, and the moonlight gave an additional and yet more solemn calm to those large and harmonious and passionless features, in which the sculpture of that type of wisdom united so much of

loveliness with awe; half-way up the extremities of the steps, darkened the green and massive foliage of the aloe, and the shadow of the Eastern palm cast its long and unwavering boughs partially over the marble surface of the stairs.

Something there was in the stillness of the place, and the strange aspect of the sculptured sphinxes, which thrilled the blood of the priest with a nameless and ghostly fear, and he longed even for an echo to his noiseless steps as he ascended to the threshold.

He knocked at the door, over which was wrought an inscription, in characters unfamiliar to his eyes; it opened without a sound, and a tall Ethiopian slave, without question or salutation, motioned to him to proceed.

The wide hall was lighted by lofty candelabra of elaborate bronze, and round the walls were wrought vast hieroglyphics, in dark and solemn colours, which contrasted strangely with the bright hues and graceful shapes with which the inhabitants of Italy decorated their abodes. At the extremity of the hall, a slave, whose countenance, though not African, was darker by many shades than the usual colour of the south, advanced to meet him.

"I seek Arbaces," said the priest, but his voice trembled even in his own ear. The slave bowed his head in silence, and leading Apæcides to a wing without the hall, conducted him up a narrow staircase, and then traversing several rooms in which the stern and thoughtful beauty of the sphinx still made the chief and most impressive object of the priest's notice—Apæcides found himself in a dim and half-lighted chamber in the presence of the Egyptian.

Arbaces was seated before a small table, on which lay unfolded several scrolls of papyrus, impressed with the same character as that on the threshold of the mansion. A small tripod stood at a little distance, from the incense in which the smoke slowly rose. Near this was a vast globe, depicting the signs of heaven, and upon another table lay several instruments, of curious and quaint shape, whose uses were unknown to Apæcides. The farther extremity of the room was concealed by a curtain, and the oblong window in the roof admitted the rays of the moon, mingling sadly with the single lamp which burned in the apartment.

"Seat yourself, Apæcides," said the Egyptian, without rising.

The young man obeyed.

"You ask me," resumed Arbaces, after a short pause, in which he seemed absorbed in thought—"You ask me—or would do so, the mightiest secrets which the soul of man is fitted to receive; it is the enigma of life itself that you desire me to solve. Placed like children in the dark, and but for a little while, in this dim and confined existence, we shape out spectres in the obscurity; our thoughts now sink back into ourselves in terror, now wildly plunge themselves into the guideless gloom, guessing what it may contain; stretching our helpless hands here and there, lest, blindly, we stumble upon some hidden danger; not knowing the limits that confine, thinking now they suffocate us with confusion, thinking now that they extend far away into eternity. In this state all wisdom consists necessarily in the solution of two questions—'What are we to believe, and what are we to reject?' These questions you desire me to decide."

Apæcides bowed his head in assent.

"Man *must* have some belief," continued the Egyptian, in a tone of sadness. "He must fasten his hope to something: it is our common nature that you inherit. When, aghast and terrified to see that in which you have been taught to place your faith swept away, you float over a dreary and shoreless sea of incertitude, you cry for help, you ask for some plank to cling to, some land, however dim and distant, to attain. Well then—listen. You have not forgotten our conversation of to-day?"

"Forgotten!"

"I confessed to you that those deities, for whom smoke so many altars, were but inventions. I confessed to you that our rites and ceremonies were but mummeries, to cheat the herd to their proper good. I explained to you that from those cheats came the bonds of society, the harmony of the world, the power of the wise; that power is in the obedience of the vulgar. Continue we then these salutary delusions—if man must have some belief, continue to him that which his fathers have made dear to him, and which custom sanctifies and strengthens. In seeking a subtler faith for us, whose senses are too spiritual for the gross one, let us leave others that support which crumbles from ourselves. This is wise—it is benevolent."

"Proceed."

"This being settled," resumed the Egyptian, "the old landmarks being left uninjured for those whom we are about to desert—we gird up our loins and depart to new climes of faith. Dismiss at once from your recollection, from your thought, all that you have believed before. Suppose the mind a blank, an unwritten scroll, fit to receive impressions for the first time. Look round the world—observe its order—its regularity—its design. Something must have created it—the design speaks a designer—in that certainty we first touch land. But what is that something?—a God, you cry. Stay—no confused and confusing names—Of that which created the world we know, we can know nothing, save these attributes—Power and Unvarying Regularity—stern—crushing—relentless Regularity—heeding no individual cases—rolling—sweeping—burning on—no matter what scattered hearts, severed from the general mass, fall ground and scorched beneath its wheels. The mixture of evil with good—the existence of suffering and of crime—in all times have perplexed the wise. They created a God—they supposed him benevolent. How then came this evil?—why did he permit—nay, why invent—why perpetuate it? To account for this, the Persian creates a second spirit, whose nature is evil, and supposes a continual war between that and the God of good. In our own shadowy and tremendous Typhon, the Egyptians image a similar demon. Perplexing blunder that yet more bewilders us!—folly that arose from the vain delusion that makes a palpable—a corporeal—a human being—of this unknown Power—that clothes the Invisible with attributes and a nature similar to the Seen. No—to this Designer let us give a name that does not command our bewildering associations—and the mystery becomes more clear—that name is NECESSITY. Necessity, say the Greeks, compels the gods,—then why the gods?—their agency becomes unnecessary—dismiss them at once. Necessity is the ruler of all we see;—power, regularity—these two qualities make its nature. Would you ask more?—you can learn nothing—whether it be eternal—whether it compels us, its creatures, to new careers after that darkness which we call death—we cannot tell. There leave we this ancient—unseen—unfathomable power—and come to that which, to our eyes, is the great minister of its functions. This we can task more, from this we can learn more—its evidence is around us—its name is NATURE. The error of the sages has been to direct their researches to the attributes of Necessity—where all is gloom and blindness. Had they confined their researches to Nature—what of knowledge might we not already have achieved! Here patience, examination, are never directed in vain. We see what we explore; our minds ascend a palpable ladder of causes and effects. Nature is the great spirit of the external universe—and Necessity imposes upon it the laws by which it acts—and imparts to us the powers by which we examine—those powers are curiosity and memory—their union is reason—their perfection is wisdom. Well, then, I examine by the help of these powers

this inexhaustible Nature. I examine the earth—the air—the ocean—the heaven—I find that all have a mystic sympathy with each other—that the moon sways the tides—that the air maintains the earth, and is the medium of the life and sense of things—that by the knowledge of the stars we measure the limits of the earth—that we portion out the epochs of time—that by their pale light we are guided into the abyss of the past—that in their solemn lore we discern the destinies of the future. And thus, while we know not that which Necessity is, we learn at least her decrees. And now, what morality do we glean from this religion?—for religion it is. I believe in two deities, Nature and Necessity; I worship the last by reverence, the first by investigation. What is the morality it teaches? 'This—all things are subject but to general rules; the sun shines for the joy of the many—it may bring sorrow to the few; the night sheds sleep on the multitude—but it harbours murder as well as rest; the forests adorn the earth—but shelter the serpent and the lion: the ocean supports a thousand barks—but it engulfs the one. It is only thus for the general, and not for the universal, benefit that Nature acts, and Necessity speeds on her awful course. This is the morality of the dread agents of the world—it is mine, who am their creature. I would preserve the delusions of priestcraft—for they are serviceable to the multitude; I would impart to man the arts I discover—the sciences I perfect; I would speed the vast career of civilizing lore:—in this I serve the mass—I fulfil the general law—I execute the great moral that Nature preaches. For myself I claim the individual exception; I claim it for the wise—satisfied that my individual actions are nothing in the great balance of good and evil; satisfied that the product of my knowledge can give greater blessings to the mass, than my desires can operate evil on the few, (for the first can extend to remotest regions and humanize nations yet unborn,) I give to the world wisdom, to myself freedom. I enlighten the lives of others, and I enjoy my own. Yes; our wisdom is eternal, but our life is short; make the most of it while it lasts. Surrender thy youth to pleasure, and thy senses to delight. Soon comes the hour when the wine-cup is shattered, and the garlands shall cease to bloom. Enjoy while you may. Be still, O Apæcides, my pupil and my follower! I will teach thee the mechanism of Nature, her darkest and her wildest secrets—the lore which fools call magic—and the mighty mysteries of the stars. By this shalt thou discharge thy duty to the mass; by this shalt thou enlighten thy race. But I will lead thee also to pleasures of which the vulgar do not dream; and the day which thou givest to men shall be followed by the sweet light which thou surrenderest to thyself."

As the Egyptian ceased, there rose about, around, beneath, the softest music that Lydia ever taught, or Ionia ever perfected. It came like a stream of sound—bathing the senses unawares;—enervating—subduing with delight. It seemed the melodies of invisible spirits, such as the shepherd might have heard in the golden age—floating through the vales of Thessaly, or in the noontide glades of Paphos. The words which had rushed to the lip of Apæcides, in answer to the sophistries of the Egyptian, died tremblingly away. He felt it as a profanation to break upon that enchanted strain—the susceptibility of his excited nature, the Greek softness and ardour of his secret soul, were swayed and captured by surprise. He sank on the seat with parted lips and thirsting ear—while in a chorus of voices bland and melting as those which waked Psyche in the Halls of Love rose the following song:—

THE HYMN OF EROS.

By the cool banks where soft Cephissus flows,
A voice sailed trembling down the waves of air;
The leaves blushed brighter in the Teian's rose,
The doves couch'd breathless in their summer air;

While from their hands the purple flowrets fell,
The laughing Hours stood listening in the sky;
From Pan's green cave to Ægle's* haunted cell,
Heaved the charmed earth in one delicious sigh.

"Love, sons of earth! I am the power of Love,
Eldest of all the gods with Chaos† born;
My smile sheds light along the courts above
My kisses wake the eyelids of the morn.

"Mine are the stars — there, ever as ye gaze
Ye meet the deep spell of my haunting eyes:
Mine is the moon — and mournful if her rays,
'T is that she lingers where her Carian lies

"The flowers are mine — the blushes of the rose,
The violet charming zephyr to the shade;
Mine the quick light that in the May-beam glows,
Mine every dream that leafs‡ the lonely glade.

"Love, sons of earth — for love is earth's soft lore,
Look where ye will — earth overflows with me;
Learn from the waves that ever kiss the shore,
And the wind's nestling on the heaving sea.

"All teaches love!" The sweet voice, like a dream,
Meked in light — yet still the airs above,
The waving sedges and the whispering stream,
And the green forest rustling — murmured "LOVE!"

As the voices died away, the Egyptian seized the hand of Apæcides, and led him wandering, intoxicated, yet half-reluctant, across the chamber towards the curtain at the far end; and now, from behind that curtain, there seemed to burst a thousand sparkling stars; the veil itself, hitherto dark, was now lighted by these fires behind into the tenderest blue of heaven. It represented heaven itself, — such a heaven as in the nights of June might have shown down over the streams of Castaly. Here and there were painted rosy and aerial clouds, from which smiled by the limner's art faces of divinest beauty; on which reposed the shapes of which Phydias and Apelles dreamed. And the stars which studded the transparent azure rolled rapidly as they shone, while the music that again woke with a livelier and lighter sound seemed to imitate the melody of the joyous spheres.

"Oh! what miracle is this, Arbaces?" said Apæcides, in faltering accents. "After having denied the gods, art thou about to reveal to me —"

"Their pleasures!" interrupted Arbaces, in a tone so different from its usual cold and tranquil harmony that Apæcides started, and thought the Egyptian himself transformed: and now, as they neared the curtain, a wild — a loud — an exulting melody burst from behind its concealment. With that sound the veil was, as it were, rent in twain — it parted — it seemed to vanish into air; and a scene, which no Sybarite ever more than rivalled, broke upon the dazzled gaze of the youthful priest. A vast banquet-room stretched beyond, blazing with countless lights, which filled the

* The fairest of the Naiads.

† Hesiod.

‡ The learned reader will recognize this image more than once among the ancient poets.

warm air with the scents of frankincense, of jasmine, of violets, of myrrh ; all that the most odorous flowers, all that the most costly spices could distil, seemed gathered into one ineffable and ambrosial essence : from the light columns that sprang upward to the airy roof hung draperies of white, studded with golden stars. At the extremities of the room, two fountains cast up a spray, which, catching the rays of the roseate light, glittered like countless diamonds. In the centre of the room, as they entered, there rose slowly from the floor, to the sound of unseen minstrelsy, a table spread with all the viands which sense ever devoted to fancy, and vases of that lost Myrrhine fabric,* so glowing in its colours, so transparent in its material, were crowned with the exotics of the East. The couches, to which this table was the centre, were covered with tapestries of azure and gold ; and from invisible tubes in the vaulted roof descended showers of fragrant waters, that cooled the delicious air, and contended with the lamps, as if the spirits of wave and fire disputed which element could furnish forth the most delicious odours. And now, from behind the snowy draperies, trooped such forms as Adonis beheld when he lay on the lap of Venus. They came, some with garlands, others with lyres : they surrounded the youth, they led his steps to the banquet. They flung the chaplets round him in rosy chains. The earth — the thought of earth vanished from his soul. He imagined himself in a dream, and suppressed his breath lest he should wake too soon ; the senses to which he had never yielded as yet beat in his burning pulse, and confused his dizzy and reeling sight. And while thus amazed and lost, once again, but in brisk and Bacchic measures, rose the magic strain.

ANACREONTIC.

In the veins of the calix foams and glows
The blood of the mantling vine,
But, oh ! in the bowl of youth there glows
A Lesbium more divine !

Bright, bright,
As the liquid light,
Its waves through thine eyelids shine !

Fill up, fill up, to the sparkling brim,
The juice of the young Lyæus ; †
The grape is the key that we owe to him
From the jail of the world to free us.
Drink, drink,
What need to shrink,
When the lamps alone can see us ?

Drink, drink, as I quaff from thine eyes
The wine of a softer tree,
Give thy smiles to the god of the grape — thy sighs,
Beloved one, give to me.

Turn, turn,
My glances burn,
And thirst for a look from thee !

As the song ended, a group of three maidens, entwined with a chain of starred flowers, and who, while they imitated, might have shamed the Graces, advanced towards him in the gliding measures of the Ionian dance ; such as the Nereids wreathed in moonlight on the yellow sands of the Ægean wave ; such as Cytherea taught her handmaids in the marriage-feast of Psyche and her son.

* Which, however, was probably the porcelain of China ; though this is a matter which admits of considerable dispute.

† Name of Bacchus, from *λυω*, to unbind, to release.

Now approaching, they wreathed their chaplet round his head ; now kneeling, the youngest of the three proffered him the bowl, from which the wine of Lesbos foamed and sparkled. The youth resisted no more, he grasped the intoxicating cup, the blood mantled fiercely through his veins. He sank upon the breast of the nymph who sat beside him, and turning with swimming eyes to seek for Arbaces, whom he had lost in the whirl of his emotions, he beheld him seated beneath a canopy at the upper end of the table, and gazing upon him with a smile that encouraged him to pleasure. He beheld him, but not as he had hitherto seen, with dark and sable garments, with a brooding and solemn brow ; a robe that dazzled the sight, so studded was its whitest surface with gold and gems, blazed upon his majestic form, white roses, alternated with the emerald and the ruby, and shaped tiara-like, crowned his raven locks. He appeared, like Ulysses, to have gained the glory of a second youth—his features seemed to have exchanged thought for beauty, and he towered amid the loveliness that surrounded him, in all the beaming and relaxing benignity of an Olympian god.

"Drink, feast, love, my pupil!" said he ; "blush not that thou art passionate and young. That which thou art thou feelest in thy veins—that which thou shalt be, survey!"

With this he pointed to a recess, and the eyes of Apæcides, following the gesture, beheld on a pedestal, placed between the statues of Bacchus and Idalia, the form of a skeleton.

"Start not," resumed the Egyptian ; "that friendly guest admonishes us but of the shortness of life. From its jaws I hear a voice that summons us to ENJOY."

As he spoke, a group of nymphs surrounded the statue ; they laid chaplets on its pedestal, and while the cups were emptied and refilled at that glowing board, they sang the following strain :—

BACCHIC HYMNS TO THE IMAGE OF DEATH.

1.

Thou art in the land of the shadowy host,
 Thou that didst drink and love ;
 By the solemn river, a gliding ghost,
 But thy thought is ours above
 If memory yet can fly
 Back to the golden sky,
 And mourn the pleasures lost !
 By the ruined hall these flowers we lay,
 Where thy soul once held its palace ;
 When the rose to thy scent and sight was gay,
 And the smile was in the chalice,
 And the cithara's silver voice
 Could bid thy heart rejoice
 When night eclipsed the day.

Here a new group, advancing, turned the tide of the music into a quicker and more joyous strain :—

2.

Death, death is the gloomy shore
 Where we all sail ;
 Soft, soft, thou gliding oar—
 Blow soft, sweet gale.
 Chain with bright wreaths the hours,
 Victims if all ;
 Ever, 'mid song and flowers,
 Victims should fall !

Pausing for a moment, yet quicker and quicker danced the silver-footed music : —

Since life 's so short, we 'll live to laugh
 Ah ! wherefore waste a minute !
 If youth 's the cup we yet can quaff,
 Be love the pearl within it !

A third band now approached with brimming cups, which they poured in libation upon that strange altar ; and once more, slow and solemn, rose the changeful melody : —

3.

Thou art welcome, Guest of gloom,
 From the far and fearful sea !
 When the last rose sheds its bloom,
 Our board shall be spread with thee !
 All hail, dark guest !
 Who hath so fair a plea
 Our welcome guest to be
 As thou, whose solemn hall
 At last shall feast us all,
 In the dim and dismal coast ?
 Long yet be we the host !
 And thou, Dead Shadow, thou,
 All joyless though thy brow,
 Thou — but our passing guest !

At this moment, she who sat beside Apæcides suddenly took up the song : —

Happy is yet our doom,
 The earth and the sun are ours !
 And far from the dreary tomb
 Speed the wings of the rosy Hours.
 Sweet is for thee the bowl,
 Sweet are thy looks, my love ;
 I fly to thy tender soul,
 As the bird to its mated dove !
 Take me, ah, take !
 Clasp'd to thy guardian breast.
 Soft let me sink to rest ;
 But wake me — ah, wake,
 And tell me with words and sighs,
 But more with thy melting eyes,
 That my sun is not set —
 That the torch is not quenched at the urn,
 That we love, and we breathe and burn,
 Tell me — thou lov'st me yet !

BOOK II.

"Lucus tremescit, tota succusso solo
Nutavit aula, dubia quo pondus daret
Ac fluctuanti similis."

Senec. *Thyestis*, v. 693.

CHAPTER I.

"A FLASH HOUSE" IN POMPEII — AND THE GENTLEMEN OF THE CLASSIC RING.

To one of those parts of Pompeii which were tenanted, not by the lords of pleasure, but by its minions and its victims — the haunt of gladiators and prize-fighters — of the vicious and the penniless — of the savage and the obscene — the Alsatia of an ancient city — we are now transported.

It was a large room, that opened at once on the confined and crowded lane. Before the threshold were a group of men, whose iron and well-trung muscles, whose short and Herculean necks, whose hardy and reckless countenances indicated the champions of the arena. On a shelf, without the shop, were ranged jars of wine and oil, and right over this was inserted, in the wall, a coarse painting, which exhibited gladiators drinking, so ancient and so venerable is the custom of signs! Within the room were placed several small tables, arranged some what in the modern fashion of "boxes;" and round these were seated several knots of men, some drinking, some playing at dice, some at that more skilful game called "*duodecim scripta*," which certain of the blundering learned have mistaken for chess, though it *rather*, perhaps, resembled backgammon of the two, and was usually, though not always, played by the assistance of dice. The hour was in the early forenoon, and nothing better, perhaps, than that unseasonable time itself denoted the habitual indolence of these tavern-loungers. Yet despite the situation of the house, and the character of its inmates, it indicated none of that sordid squalor which would have characterized a similar haunt in a modern city. The gay disposition of all the Pompeians, who sought, at least, to gratify the sense even where they neglected the mind, was typified by the gaudy colours which decorated the walls, and the shapes, fantastic, but not inelegant, in which the lamps, the drinking-cups, the commonest household utensils were wrought.

"By Pollux," said one of the gladiators, as he leaned against the wall of the threshold, "the wine thou sellest us, old Silenus," and as he spoke he slapped a portly personage on the back, "is enough to thin the best blood in one's veins."

The man thus caressingly saluted, and whose bared arms, white apron, and keys and napkin tucked carelessly within his girdle, indicated him to be the host of the tavern, was already passed into the autumn of his years, but his form was still so robust and athletic that he might have shar-

even the sinewy shapes beside him, save that the muscle had seeded, as it were, into flesh, that the cheeks were swelled and bloated and the increasing stomach threw into shade the vast and massive chest which rose above it.

"None of thy scurrilous blusterings with me," growled the gigantic landlord, in the gentle semiroar of an insulted tiger; "my wine is good enough for a carcass which shall so soon soak the dust of the *Spoliarium*."*

"Croakest thou thus, old raven!" returned the gladiator, laughing scornfully; "thou shalt live to hang thyself with despite when thou seest me win the palm crown: and when I get the purse at the amphitheatre, as I certainly shall, my first vow to Hercules shall be to forswear thee and thy vile potations evermore."

"Hear to him—hear to this modest *Pyrgopolinices*! He has certainly served under *Bombochides Cluninstaridysarchides*," cried the host.† "Sporus, Niger, Tetraides, he declares he shall win the purse from you. Why, by the gods, each of your muscles is strong enough to stifle all his body, or I know nothing of the arena!"

"Ha!" said the gladiator, colouring with rising fury, "our lanista would tell a different story."

"What story could he tell against me, vain Lydon?" said Tetraides, frowning.

"Or me, who have conquered in fifteen fights?" said the gigantic Niger, stalking up to the gladiator.

"Or me?" grunted Sporus, with eyes of fire.

"Tush!" said Lydon, folding his arms, and regarding his rivals with a reckless air of defiance. "The time of trial will soon come: keep your valour till then."

"Ay, do," said the surly host; "and if I press down my thumb to save you, may the Fates cut my thread."

"Your rope, you mean," said Lydon, sneeringly; "here is a sesterce to buy one."

The Titan wine-vender seized the hand extended to him, and griped it in so stern a vice that the blood spirted from the fingers' ends over the garments of the bystanders.

They set up a savage laugh.

"I will teach thee, young braggart, to play the Macedonian with me. I am no puny Persian, I warrant thee! What, man! have I not fought twenty years in the ring, and never lowered my arms once? and have I not received the rod from the editor's own hand as a sign of victory, and as a grace to retirement on my laurels? And am I now to be lectured by a boy?" So saying, he flung the hand from him in scorn.

Without changing a muscle, but with the same smiling face with which he had previously taunted mine host, did the gladiator brave the painful grasp he had undergone. But no sooner was his hand released, than, crouching for one moment as a wild cat crouches, you might see his hair bristle on his head and beard, and with a fierce and shrill yell, he sprang on the throat of the giant with an impetus that threw him, vast and sturdy as he was, from his balance; and down, with the crash of a falling rock, he fell, while over him fell also his ferocious foe.

Our host, perhaps, had had no need of the rope so kindly recommended to him by Lydon, had he remained three minutes longer in that position; but,

* The place to which the killed or mortally wounded were dragged from the arena.

† *Miles Gloriosus*, Act I. As much as to say in modern phrase, "He has served under *Bombastes Furioso*."

summoned to his assistance by the noise of his fall, a woman, who had hitherto kept in an inner apartment, rushed to the scene of battle. This new ally was in herself a match for the gladiator; she was tall, lean, and with arms that could give other than soft embraces. In fact, the gentle help-mate of Burbo the wine-seller had, like himself, fought in the lists,* nay, under the emperor's eye. And Burbo himself—Burbo, the unconquered in the field,—according to report, now and then yielded the palm to his soft Stratonice. This sweet creature no sooner saw the imminent peril that awaited her worse half, than without other weapons than those with which Nature had provided her, she darted upon the incumbent gladiator, and clasping him round the waist with her long and snake-like arms, lifted him with a sudden wrench from the body of her husband, leaving only his hands still clinging to the throat of his foe. So have we seen a dog snatched by the hind-legs from the strife with a fallen rival, in the arms of some envious groom; so have we seen one-half of him high in air—passive and offenceless—while the other half, head, teeth, eyes, claws, seemed buried and engulfed in the mangled and prostrate enemy. Meanwhile the gladiators, lapped and pampered and glutted upon blood, crowded delightedly round the combatants—their nostrils distended, their lips grinning, their eyes gloatingly fixed on the bloody throat of the one, and the indented talons of the other.

“*Habet!* (he has got it!) *habet!*” cried they, with a sort of yell, rubbing their nervous hands.

“*Non habeo*, ye liars! I have not got it!” shouted the host, as with a mighty effort he wrenched himself from those deadly hands, and rose to his feet breathless, panting, lacerated, bloody; and fronting with reeling eyes the glaring look and grinning teeth of his baffled foe, now struggling (but struggling with disdain) in the gripe of the sturdy amazon.

“Fair play,” cried the gladiators, “one to one;” and crowding round Lydon and the woman, they separated our pleasing host from his courteous guest.

But Lydon, feeling ashamed at his present position, and endeavouring in vain to shake off the grasp of the virago, slipped his hand into his girdle, and drew forth a short knife. So menacing was his look, so brightly gleamed the blade, that Stratonice, who was used only to the fistic methods of battle, started back in alarm.

“Oh gods!” cried she, “the ruffian! he has concealed weapons! Is that fair? Is that like a gentleman and a gladiator? No, indeed, I scorn such fellows!” With that she contemptuously turned her back on the gladiator, and hastened to examine the condition of her husband.

But he, as much inured to these constitutional exercises as an English bull-dog is to a contest with a more gentle antagonist, had already recovered himself. The purple hues receded from the crimson surface of his cheek, the veins of the forehead retired into their wonted size. He shook himself with a complacent grunt, satisfied that he was still alive, and then looking at his foe from head to foot with an air of more approbation than he had ever bestowed upon him before—

“By Castor,” said he, “thou art a stronger fellow than I took thee for! I see thou art a man of merit and virtue; give me thy hand, my hero.”

“Jolly old Burbo!” cried the gladiators, applauding, “stanch to the backbone—give him thy hand, Lydon.”

“Oh to be sure,” said the gladiator; “but now I have tasted his blood, I long to lap the whole—”

“Per Hercle!” returned mine host, quite unmoved, “that is the true gladiator feeling. Pollux! to think what good training may make a man; why a beast could not be fiercer!”

*Not only did women sometimes fight in the amphitheatres, but even those of noble birth participated in that meek ambition.

"A beast, O dullard! we beat the beasts hollow!" cried Tetraides.

"Well, well," said Stratonice, who was now employed in smoothing her hair and adjusting her locks; "If ye are all good friends again, I recommend you to be quiet and orderly: for some young noblemen, your patrons and backers, have sent to say they will come here to pay you a visit—they wish to see you more at their ease than at the schools, before they make up their bets on the great fight at the amphitheatre. So they always come to my house for that purpose; they know we only receive the best gladiators in Pompeii—our society is very select, praised be the gods!"

"Yes," continued Burbo, drinking off a bowl, or rather a pail, of wine, "a man who has won my laurels, can only encourage the brave. Lydon, drink, my boy; may you have an honourable old age like mine!"

"Come here," said Stratonice, drawing her husband to her affectionately by the ears, in that caress which Tibullus has so prettily described, "come here!"

"Not so hard, she-wolf, thou art worse than the gladiator," murmured the huge jaws of Burbo.

"Hist!" said she, whispering him: "Calenus has just stolen in, disguised, by the back way; I hope he has brought the sesterces."

"Ho! ho! I will join him," said Burbo; "meanwhile, I say, keep a sharp eye on the cups, attend to the score. Let them not cheat thee, wife; they are heroes to be sure, but then they are arrant rogues; Cacus was nothing to them."

"Never fear me, fool," was the conjugal reply; and Burbo, satisfied with the dear assurance, strode through the apartment, and sought the penetralia of his house.

"So those soft patrons are coming to look at our muscles," said Niger: "who sent to previse thee of it, my mistress?"

"Lepidus. He brings with him Clodius, the surest batter in Pompeii, and the young Greek Glaucus."

"A wager on a wager," cried Tetraides; "Clodius bets on me, for twenty sesterces! what say you, Lydon?"

"He bets on *me*!" said Lydon.

"No, on *me*," grunted Sporus.

"Dolts, do you think he would prefer any of you to Niger?" said the athletic, thus modestly naming himself.

"Well, well," said Stratonice, as she pierced a huge amphora for her guests, who had now seated themselves before one of the tables, "great men and brave, as ye all think yourselves, which of you will fight the Numidian lion, in case no malefactor should be found to deprive you of the option?"

"I who have escaped your arms, stout Stratonice," said Lydon, "might safely, I think, encounter the lion."

"But tell me," said Tetraides, "where is that pretty young slave of yours, the blind girl, with bright eyes? I have not seen her in a long time."

"Oh! she is too delicate for you, my son of Neptune,"* said the hostess, "and too nice even for us, I think. We send her into the town to sell flowers and sing to the ladies; she makes us more money so than she would by waiting on you. Besides, she has often other employments which lie under the rose."

"Other employments!" said Niger; "why, she is too young for them."

"Silence, beast!" said Stratonice; "you think there is no play but the Corinthian. If Nydia were twice the age she is at present, she would be equally fit for Vesta, poor girl."

"But hark ye, Stratonice," said Lydon; "how didst thou come by so

* Son of Neptune, a Latin phrase for a bolsterous ferocious fellow.

gentle and delicate a slave? she were more meet for the handmaid of some rich matron of Rome than for thee."

"That is true," returned Stratonice, "and some day or other I shall make my fortune by selling her. How came I by Nydia, thou askest?"

"Ay."

"Why, thou seest, my slave Staphyla — thou rememberest Staphyla, Niger?"

"Ay, a large-handed wench, with a face like a comic mask. How should I forget her, by Pluto! whose handmaid she doubtless is at this moment."

"Tush, brute! — Well, Staphyla died one day, and a great loss she was to me, and I went into the market to buy me another slave. But, by the gods, they were all grown so dear since I had bought poor Staphyla, and money was so scarce, that I was about to leave the place in despair, when a merchant plucked me by the robe: 'Mistress,' said he, 'dost thou want a slave cheap? I have a child to sell, a bargain. She is but little, and almost an infant, it is true; but she is quick and quiet, docile and clever, sings well, and broiders, and is of good blood, I assure you.' — 'Of what country?' said I. — 'Thessalian.' Now I knew the Thessalians were acute and gentle; so I said I would see the girl. I found her just as you see her now, scarcely smaller and scarcely younger in appearance. She looked patient and resigned enough, with her hands crossed on her bosom and her eyes downcast. I asked the merchant his price; it was moderate, and I bought her at once. The merchant brought her to my house, and disappeared in an instant. Well, my friends, guess my astonishment when I found she was blind. Ha! ha! a clever fellow that merchant! I ran at once to the magistrate's, but the rogue was already gone from Pompeii. So I was forced to go home in a very ill humour, I assure you; and the poor girl felt the effects of it too. But it was not her fault that she was blind, for she had been so from her birth. By degrees we got reconciled to our purchase. True, she had not the strength of Staphyla, and was of very little use in the house, but she could soon find her way about the town as well as if she had the eyes of Argus; and when one morning she brought us home a handful of sesterces, which she said she had got from selling some flowers she had gathered in our poor little garden, we thought the gods had sent her to us. So from that time we let her go out as she likes, filling her basket with flowers which she wreathes into garlands after the Thessalian fashion, which pleases the gallants; and the great people seem to take a fancy to her, for they always pay her more than they do any other flower-girl, and she brings all of it home to us, which is more than any other slave would do. So I work for myself, but I shall soon afford from her earnings to buy me a second Staphyla: doubtless the Thessalian kidnapper had stolen the blind girl from gentle parents;* besides her skill in the garlands, she sings and plays on the cithara, which also brings money; and lately — but *that* is a secret."

"That is a secret — what!" cried Lydon, "art thou turned sphinx?"

"Sphinx, no — why sphinx?"

"Cease thy gabble, good mistress, and bring us our meat — I am hungry," said Sporus, impatiently.

"And I too," echoed the grim Niger, whetting his knife on the palm of his hand.

The amazon stalked away to the kitchen, and soon returned with a tray laden with large pieces of meat, half-raw; for so, as now, did the heroes of the prize-fight imagine they best sustained their hardihood and ferocity:

* The Thessalian slave merchants were celebrated for purloining persons of birth and education; they did not always spare those of their own country. Aristophanes sneers bitterly at that people (proverbially treacherous) for their unquenchable desire of gain by this biter of flesh.

they drew round the table with the eyes of famished wolves — the meat vanished, the wine flowed. So leave we those important personages of classic life, to follow the steps of Burbo.

CHAPTER II.

TWO WORTHIES.

In the earlier times of Rome, the priesthood was a profession, not of lucre, but of honour; it was embraced by the noblest citizens — it was forbidden to the plebeians. Afterward, and long previous to the present date, it was equally open to all ranks; at least that part of the profession which embraced the flamines, or priests, not of religion generally, but of peculiar gods. Even the priest of Jupiter (the Flamen Dialis,) preceded by a lictor, and entitled by his office to the entrance of the senate, at first the especial dignitary of the patricians, was subsequently the choice of the people. The less national and less honoured deities were usually served by plebeian ministers, and many embraced the profession, as now the Catholic Christians enter the monastic fraternity, less from the impulse of devotion than the suggestions of a calculating poverty. Thus Calenus, the priest of Isis, was of the lowest origin. His relations, though not his parents, were freedmen. He had received from them a liberal education, and from his father a small patrimony, which he had soon exhausted. He embraced the priesthood as a last resource from distress. Whatever the state emoluments of the sacred profession, which at that time were probably small, the officers of a popular temple could never complain of the profits of their calling. There is no profession so lucrative as that which practises on the superstition of the multitude.

Calenus had but one surviving relative at Pompeii, and that was Burbo. Various dark and disreputable ties, stronger than those of blood, united together their hearts and interest; and often the minister of Isis stole disguised and furtively from the supposed austerity of his devotions — and gliding through the back-door of the retired gladiator, a man infamous alike by vices and by profession, rejoiced to throw off the last rag of an hypocrisy which, but for the dictates of avarice, his ruling passion, would at all times have sat clumsily upon a nature too brutal for even the mimicry of virtue.

Wrapped in one of those large mantles which came in use among the Romans in proportion as they dismissed the toga, whose ample folds well concealed the form, and in which a sort of hood (attached to it) afforded no less a security to the features, Calenus now sat in the small and private chamber of the wine-seller, from which a small faux, or passage, ran at once to that back entrance with which nearly all the houses of Pompeii were furnished.

Opposite to him sat the sturdy Burbo, carefully counting, on a table between them, a little pile of coins which the priest had just poured from his purse, for purses were as common then as now, with this difference — they were usually better furnished!

"You see," said Calenus, "that we pay you handsomely, and you ought to thank me for recommending you to so advantageous a market."

"I do, my cousin, I do," replied Burbo, affectionately, as he swept the coins into a leathern receptacle, which he then deposited in his girdle, drawing the buckle around his capacious waist more closely than he was wont to do in the lax hours of his domestic avocations; "and by Isis, Pisis, and

Nysia, or whatever other gods there may be in Egypt, my little Nydia is a very Hesperides, a garden of gold, to me."

"She sings well, and plays like a muse," returned Calenus; "those are virtues that he who employs me always pays liberally."

"He is a god," cried Burbo, enthusiastically; "every rich man who is generous deserves to be worshipped. But come, a cup of wine, old friend—tell me more about it. What does she do? she is frightened, talks of her oath, and reveals nothing."

"Nor will I, by my right hand; I too have taken that terrible oath of secrecy."

"Oath! what are oaths to men like us?"

"True, oaths of a common fashion; but this—" and the stalwart priest shuddered as he spoke. "Yet," he continued, in emptying a huge cup of unmixed wine, "I will own to thee, that it is not so much the oath that I dread as the vengeance of him who proposed it. By the gods! he is a mighty sorcerer, and could draw my confession from the moon did I dare to make it to her. Talk no more of this. By Pollux, wild as those banquets are which I enjoy with him, I am never quite at my ease there. I love, my boy, one jolly hour with thee, and one of the plain, unsophisticated, laughing girls that I meet in this chamber, all smoke-dried though it be, better than whole nights of those magnificent debauches."

"Ho! sayest thou so! to-morrow night, please the gods, we will have, then, a snug carousal."

"With all my heart," said the priest, rubbing his hands, and drawing himself nearer to the table.

At this moment they heard a slight noise at the door, as of one feeling the handle. The priest lowered the cowl over his head.

"Tush!" whispered the host, "it is but the blind girl," as Nydia opened the door and entered the apartment.

"Ho! girl, and how dost thou? thou lookest pale—thou hast kept late revels. No matter, the young must be always the young," said Burbo, encouragingly.

The girl made no answer, but she dropped on one of the seats with an air of lassitude. Her colour went and came rapidly; she beat the floor impatiently with her small feet, then she suddenly raised her face, and said, with a determined voice,—

"Master, you may starve me if you will, you may beat me, you may threaten me with death, but I will go no more to that unholy place."

"How, fool!" said Burbo, in a savage voice, and his heavy brows met darkly over his fierce and bloodshot eyes; "how, rebellious! take care."

"I have said it," said the poor girl, crossing her hands on her breast.

"What! my modest one, sweet vestal, thou wilt go no more? very well, thou shalt be carried."

"I will raise the city with my cries, said she, passionately, and the colour mounted to her brow.

"We will take care of that, too,—thou shalt go gagged."

"Then may the gods help me," said Nydia, rising; "I will appeal to the magistrates."

"Thine oath, remember!" said a hollow voice, as for the first time Calenus joined in the dialogue.

At those words, a trembling shook the frame of the unfortunate girl; she clasped her hands imploringly. "Wretch that I am!" cried she, and burst violently into sobs.

Whether or not it was the sound of that vehement sorrow which brought the gentle Stratonice to the spot, her grisly form at this moment appeared in the chamber.

"How now, what hast thou been doing with my slave, brute?" said she, angrily, to Burbo.

"Be quiet, wife," said he, in a tone half sullen, half timid; "you want new girdles and fine clothes, do you? Well, then, take care of your slave, or you may want them long. *Væ capiti tuo*—vengeance on thy head, wretched one!"

"What is this?" said the hag, looking from one to the other.

Nydia started, as by a sudden impulse, from the wall, against which she had leaned; she threw herself at the feet of Stratonice; she embraced her knees, and looking up at her with those sightless but touching eyes,—

"O, my mistress!" sobbed she, "you are a woman, you have had sisters, you have been young like me; feel for me, save me! I will go to those horrible feasts no more."

"Stuff!" said the hag, dragging her up rudely by one of those delicate hands, fit for no harsher labour than that of weaving the flowers which made her pleasure or her trade; "stuff, these fine scruples are not for slaves."

"Hark ye," said Burbo, drawing forth his purse, and chinkling its contents; "you hear this music, wife? by Pollux, if you do not break in your colt with a tight rein, you will hear it no more."

"The girl is tired," said Stratonice, nodding to Calenus; "she will be more docile when you next want her."

"You! you! who is here?" cried Nydia, casting her eyes round the apartment with so fearful and straining a survey that Calenus rose in alarm from his seat.

"She must see with those eyes!" muttered he.

"Who is here? Speak, in Heaven's name! Ah, if you were blind like me, you would be less cruel," said she; and she again burst into tears.

"Take her away," said Burbo, impatiently; "I hate these whimperings."

"Come," said Stratonice, pushing the poor child by the shoulders.

Nydia drew herself aside, with an air to which resolution gave dignity.

"Hear me," she said; "I have served you faithfully—I, who was brought up—ah! my mother, my poor mother! didst thou dream I should come to this?" She dashed the tears from her eyes and proceeded—"command me in aught else, and I will obey; but I tell you now, hard, stern, and inexorable as you are—I tell you that I will go there no more; or if I am forced there, that I will implore the mercy of the prætor himself—I have said it; hear me, ye gods, I swear!"

The hag's eyes glowed with fire; she seized the child by the hair with one hand, and raised on high the other—that formidable right hand, the least blow of which seemed capable to crush the frail and delicate form that trembled in her grasp. That thought itself appeared to strike her, for she suspended the blow, changed her purpose, and dragging Nydia to the wall, seized from a hook a rope, often, alas! applied to a similar purpose; and the next moment the shrill, the agonized shrieks of the blind girl rang piercingly through the house.

CHAPTER III.

GLAUCUS MAKES A PURCHASE THAT AFTERWARD COSTS HIM DEAR.

"Hollo, my brave fellows!" said Lepidus, stooping his head as he entered the low doorway of the house of Burbo; "we have come to see

which of you most honours your lanista." The gladiators rose from the table, in respect to three gallants, known to be among the gayest and richest youths of Pompeii, and whose voices were therefore the dispensers of amphitheatrical reputation.

"What fine animals!" said Clodius to Glaucus; "worthy to be gladiators."

"It is a pity they are not warriors," returned Glaucus.

A singular thing it was to see the dainty and fastidious Lepidus, whom in a banquet a ray of daylight seemed to blind, whom in the bath a breeze of air seemed to blast, in whom Nature seemed twisted and perverted from every natural impulse, and curdled into one dubious thing of effeminacy and art; — a singular thing was it to see this Lepidus, now all eagerness, and energy, and life, patting the vast shoulders of the gladiators with a blanched and girlish hand, feeling with mincing gripe their great brawn and iron muscles, all lost in calculating admiration at that manhood which he had spent his life in carefully banishing from himself.

So have we seen, at this day, the beardless flutterers of the saloons of London thronging round the heroes of Fivescourt — so have we seen them admire, and gaze, and calculate a bet — so have we seen meet together in ludicrous yet in melancholy assemblage, the two extremes of civilized society — the patrons of pleasure and its slaves — vilest of all slaves, at once ferocious and mercenary; male prostitutes, who sell their strength as women do their beauty; beasts in act, but outdoing the beasts in motive, for the last at least do not mangle themselves for money!

"Ha! Niger, how will you fight?" said Lepidus, "and with whom?"

"Sporus challenges me," said the grim giant; "we shall fight to the death, I hope."

"Ah! to be sure," grunted Sporus, with a twinkle of his small eye.

"He takes the sword, I the net and the trident: it will be rare sport. I hope the survivor will have enough to keep up the dignity of the crown."

"Never fear, we'll fill the purse, my Hector," said Clodius; "let me see, you fight against Niger? Glaucus, a bet; I back Niger."

"I told you so," cried Niger, exultingly. "The noble Clodius knows me: count yourself dead already, my Sporus."

Clodius took out his tablet, "A bet, ten sestertia.* What say you?"

"So be it," said Glaucus; "but whom have we here? I never saw this hero before;" and he glanced at Lydon, whose limbs were slighter than those of his companions, and who had something of grace, and something even of noble, in his face, which his profession had not yet wholly destroyed.

"It is Lydon, a youngster, practised only with the wooden sword as yet," answered Niger, condescendingly; "but he has the true blood in him, and has challenged Tetraides."

"He challenged me," said Lydon; "I accept the offer."

"And how do you fight?" asked Lepidus. "Chut, my boy, wait a while before you contend with Tetraides." Lydon smiled disdainfully.

"Is he a citizen or a slave?" said Clodius.

"A citizen, we are all citizens here," quoth Niger.

"Stretch out your arm, my Lydon," said Lepidus, with the air of a connoisseur.

The gladiator, with a significant glance at his companions, extended an arm which, if not so huge in its girth as those of his comrades, was so firm in its muscles, so beautifully symmetrical in its proportions, that the three visitors uttered simultaneously an admiring exclamation.

"Well, man, what is your weapon?" said Clodius, tablet in hand.

* A little more than eighty pounds.

"We are to fight first with the cestus, afterward, if both survive, with swords," returned Tetraides, sharply, and with an envious scowl.

"With the cestus?" cried Glaucus, "there you are wrong, Lydon. The cestus is the Greek fashion; I know it well. You should have encouraged flesh for that contest; you are far too thin for it—avoid the cestus."

"I cannot," said Lydon.

"And why?"

"I have said, because he has challenged me.

"But he will not hold you to the precise weapon."

"My honour holds me!" returned Lydon, proudly.

"I bet on Tetraides two to one, at the cestus," said Clodius; "shall it be? Lepidus, even betting, with swords."

"If you give me three to one, I will not take the odds," said Lepidus;

"Lydon will never come to the swords. You are mighty courteous."

"What say you, Glaucus?" said Clodius.

"I will take the odds three to one."

"Ten sestertia to thirty?"

"Yes."*

Clodius wrote the bet in his book.

"Pardon me, noble sponsor mine," said Lydon, in a low voice to Glaucus; "but how much think you the victor will gain?"

"How much? why, perhaps seven sestertia."

"You are sure it will be as much?"

"At least. But out on you! are you thinking of the money, and not the honour? Oh! Romans, everywhere ye are Romans."

A blush mantled over the bronzed cheek of the gladiator.

"Do not wrong me, noble Glaucus; I think of both; but I should never have been a gladiator but for the money."

"Base! mayest thou fall! A miser never was a hero."

"I am not a miser," said Lydon, haughtily; and he withdrew to the other end of the room.

"But I don't see Burbo; where is Burbo? I must talk with Burbo," cried Clodius.

"He is within," said Niger, pointing to the door at the extremity of the room.

"And Stratonice, the brave old lass; where is she?" quoth Lepidus.

"Why, she was here just before you entered in, but she heard something that displeased her yonder, and vanished. Pollux! old Burbo had, perhaps, caught hold of some girl in the back room. I heard a female's voice crying out; the old dame is as jealous as Juno."

"Ho! excellent," cried Lepidus, laughing. "Come, Clodius, let us go shares with Jupiter; perhaps he has caught a Leda."

At this moment a loud cry of pain and terror startled the group.

"Oh, spare me! spare me! I am but a child, I am blind: is not *that* punishment enough?"

"O Pallas! I know that voice; it is my poor flower-girl," exclaimed Glaucus; and he darted at once into the quarter whence the cry rose.

He burst the door, and beheld Nydia writhing in the grasp of the infuriate hag; the cord, already dabbled with blood, was raised in the air; it was suddenly arrested.

"Fury!" said Glaucus, and with his left hand he caught Nydia from her grasp. "How dare ye use thus a girl, one of your own sex, a child? My Nydia, my poor infant!"

* The reader will not confound the *sestertii* with the *sestertia*. A *sestertium*, which was a *sum*, not a *coin*, was a thousand times the value of a *sestertius*; the first was equivalent to 8*l.* 1*s.* 5½*d.*, the last to 1*d.* ¾ farthings of our money.

"Oh! is that you, is that Glaucus?" exclaimed the flower-girl, in a tone almost of transport; the tears stood arrested on her cheek, she smiled, she clung to his breast, she kissed his robe as she clung.

"And how dare you, pert stranger, interfere between a free woman and her slave? By the gods! despite your fine tunic and your filthy perfumes, I doubt whether you are even a Roman citizen, my manikin."

"Fair words, mistress, fair words," said Clodius, now entering with Lepidus. "This is my friend and sworn brother; he must be put under shelter of your tongue, sweet one: it rains stones!"

"Give me my slave!" shrieked the virago, placing her mighty grasp on the breast of the Greek.

"Not if all your sister Furies could help you," answered Glaucus. "Fear not, sweet Nydia, an Athenian never forsook distress!"

"Hollo!" said Burbo, rising reluctantly, "what turmoil is all this about a slave? let go the young gentleman, wife, let him go—for his sake the pert thing shall be spared this once." So saying, he drew, or rather dragged, off his ferocious helpmate.

"Methought, when we entered," said Clodius, "there was another man present."

"He is gone."

For the priest of Isis had indeed thought it high time to vanish.

"Oh, a friend of mine! a brother cupman, a quiet dog, who does not love these snarlings," said Burbo, carelessly.

"But go, child, you will tear the gentleman's tunic if you cling to him so tight; go, you are pardoned."

"Oh, do not, do not forsake me!" cried Nydia, clinging yet closer to the Athenian.

Moved by her forlorn situation, her appeal to him, her own innumerable and touching graces, the Greek seated himself on one of the rude chairs. He held her on his knees, he wiped the blood from her shoulders with his long hair, he kissed the tears from her cheeks, he whispered to her a thousand of those soothing words with which we calm the grief of a child; and so beautiful did he seem in his gentle and consoling task, that even the fierce heart of Stratonice was touched. His presence seemed to shed light over that base and obscene haunt—young, beautiful, glorious, he was the emblem of all that earth made most happy, comforting one that earth had abandoned!

"Well, who could have thought our blind Nydia had been so honoured!" said the virago, wiping her heated brow.

Glaucus looked up at Burbo.

"My good man," said he, "this is your slave; she sings well, she is accustomed to the care of flowers; I wish to make a present of such a slave to a lady. Will you sell her to me?" As he spoke, he felt the whole frame of the poor girl tremble with delight; she started up, she put her dishevelled hair from her eyes, she looked around, as if, alas! she had the power to see!

"Sell our Nydia! no, indeed," said Stratonice, gruffly.

Nydia sank back with a long sigh, and again clasped the robe of her protector.

"Nonsense," said Clodius, imperiously; "you must oblige me. What, man! what, old dame! offend me, and your trade is ruined. Is not Burbo my kinsman Pansa's client? Am I not the oracle of the amphitheatre and its heroes? If I say the word, break up your wine-jars, you sell no more; Glaucus, the slave is yours.

Burbo scratched his huge head in evident embarrassment.

"The girl is worth her weight in gold to me."

"Name your price, I am rich," said Glaucus.

The ancient Italians were like the modern, there was nothing they would not sell, much less a poor blind girl.

"I paid six sesteria for her; she is worth twelve now," muttered Stratonice.

"You shall have twenty; come to the magistrates at once, and then to my house for your money."

"I would not have sold the dear girl for a hundred, but to oblige noble Clodius," said Burbo, whiningly. "And you will speak to Pansa about the place of *designator* at the amphitheatre, noble Clodius? it would just suit me."

"Thou shalt have it," said Clodius; adding, in a whisper to Burbo, "yon Greek can make your fortune; money runs through him like a sieve; mark to-day with white chalk, my Priam."

"*An dabis?*" said Glaucus, in the formal question of sale and barter.

"*Dabitur*," answered Burbo.

"Then, then I am to go with you, — with you, — O happiness!" murmured Nydia.

"Pretty one, yes; and thy hardest task henceforth shall be to sing thy Grecian hymns to the loveliest lady in Pompeii."

The girl sprang from his clasp, a change came over her whole face, so bright the instant before; she sighed heavily, and then once more taking his hand, she said,

"I thought I was to go to *your* house."

"And so thou shalt for the present; come, — we lose time."

CHAPTER IV.

THE RIVAL OF GLAUCUS PRESSES ONWARD IN THE RACE.

IONE was one of those brilliant characters which but once or twice flash across our career. She united in the highest perfection the rarest of earthly gifts — genius and beauty. No one ever possessed superior intellectual qualities without knowing them — the alliteration of modesty and merit is pretty enough, but where merit is great, the veil of that modesty you admire never disguises its extent from its possessor. It is the proud consciousness of certain qualities that it cannot reveal to the every-day world, that gives to genius that shy, and reserved, and troubled air which puzzles and flatters you when you encounter it. Do not deceive yourself, vain worldling, by the thought that the embarrassed manner of yon great man is a sign that he does not know his superiority to you! — that which you take for modesty is but the struggle of self-esteem. He knows but too oppressively how immeasurably greater he is than you, and is only disconcerted because in the places you encounter him he finds himself suddenly descended to your level. He has not conversation, he has not thoughts, he has not intercourse with such as you — it is *your* littleness that disconcerts him, not his own!

Ione, then, knew her genius, but with that charming versatility that belongs of right to women, she had the faculty so few of a kindred genius in the less malleable sex can claim; the faculty to bend and model her graceful intellect to all whom it encountered. The sparkling fountain threw its waters alike upon the strand, the cavern, and the flowers; it refreshed, it smiled, it dazzled everywhere. That pride which is the necessary result of superiority she wore easily, — in her breast it concentrated itself in independence. She pursued thus her own bright and solitary path. She asked no aged matron to direct and guide her — she walked alone by the torch of

her own unflickering purity. She obeyed no tyrannical and absolute custom — she moulded custom to her own will, but this so delicately and with so feminine a grace, so perfect an exemption from error, that you could not say she *outraged* custom, but *commanded* it. It was possible not to love Ione, perhaps she seemed too high for the love of vulgar natures; but if you did once love her, it was to adoration. The wealth of her graces was inexhaustible — she beautified the commonest action: a word, a look from her seemed magic. Love her, and you entered into a new world, — you passed from this trite and commonplace earth; you were in a land in which your eyes saw every thing through an enchanted medium. In her presence you felt as if listening to exquisite music; you were steeped in that sentiment which has so little of earth in it, and which music so well inspires — that intoxication which refines and exalts, which seizes, it is true, the senses, but gives them the character of the soul.

She was peculiarly formed, then, to command and fascinate the less ordinary and the bolder natures of men; to love her was to unite two passions, that of love and of ambition — you aspired when you adored her. It was no wonder that she had completely chained and subdued the mysterious but burning soul of the Egyptian, a man in whom dwelt the fiercest passions. Her beauty and her soul alike enthralled him.

Set apart himself from the common world, he loved that daringness of character which also made itself among common things aloof and alone. He did not, or he would not, see that that very isolation put her yet more from him than from the vulgar. Far as the poles — far as the night from day — his solitude was divided from hers. He was solitary from his dark and solemn vices — she from her beautiful fancies, and her purity of virtue.

If it was not strange that Ione thus enthralled the Egyptian, far less strange was it that she had captured, as suddenly as irrevocably, the bright and sunny heart of the Athenian. The gladness of a temperament which seemed woven from the beams of light, had led Glaucus into pleasure. He obeyed no more vicious dictates, when he wandered into the dissipations of his time, than the exhilarating voices of youth and health. He threw the brightness of his nature over every abyss and cavern through which he strayed. His imagination dazzled him, but his heart never was corrupted. Far more penetrating than his companions deemed, he saw that they sought to prey upon his riches and his youth, but he despised wealth save as the means of enjoyment, and youth was the great sympathy that united him to them. He felt, it is true, the impulse of nobler thoughts and higher aims than in pleasure could be indulged; but the world was one vast prison, to which the sovereign of Rome was the imperial jailer; and the very virtues which in the free days of Athens who have made him ambitious, in the slavery of earth made him inactive and supine. For in that unnatural and bloated civilization, all that was noble in emulation was forbidden. Ambition in the regions of a despotic and luxurious court was but the contest of flattery and craft. Avarice had become the sole ambition — men desired prætorships and provinces only as the license to pillage, and government was but the excuse of rapine. It is in small states that glory is most active and pure — the more confined the limits of the circle, the more ardent the patriotism. Opinion is concentrated and strong — every eye reads your actions — your public motives are blended with your private ties — every spot in your narrow sphere is crowded with forms familiar since your childhood — the applause of your citizens is like the caresses of your friends. But in large states, the city is but the court; the provinces — unknown to you, unfamiliar in customs, perhaps in language, — have no claim on your patriotism, the ancestry of their inhabitants is not yours. In the court you desire favour instead of glory; at a distance from the

court public opinion has vanished from you, and self-interest has no counterpoise.

Italy, Italy! while I write, your skies are over me — your seas flow beneath my feet; listen not to the blind policy which would unite all your crested cities, mourning for their republic, into one empire: false, pernicious delusion! your only hope of regeneration is in division. Florence, Milan, Venice, Genoa, may be free once more, if each is free. But dream not of freedom for the whole while you enslave the parts; the heart must be the centre of the system, the blood must circulate freely everywhere; and in vast communities, you behold but a bloated and feeble giant, whose brain is imbecile, whose limbs are dead, and who pays in disease and weakness the penalty of transcending the natural proportions of health and vigour.

Thus thrown back upon themselves, the more ardent qualities of Glaucus found no vent, save in that overflowing imagination which gave grace to pleasure and poetry to thought. Ease was less despicable than contention with parasites and slaves, and luxury could yet be refined though ambition could not be ennobled. But all that was best and brightest in his soul awoke at once when he knew Ione. Here was an empire worthy of demigods to attain; here was a glory which the reeking smoke of a foul society could not soil or dim. Love, in every time, in every state, can thus find space for its golden altars. And tell me if there ever, even in the ages most favourable to glory, could be a triumph more exalted and elating than the conquest of one noble heart?

And whether it was that this sentiment inspired him, his ideas glowed more brightly — his soul seemed more awake and more visible in Ione's presence. If natural to love her, it was natural that she should return the passion. Young, brilliant, eloquent, enamoured, and Athenian, he was to her as the incarnation of the poetry of her fathers' land. They were not like creatures of a world in which strife and sorrow are the elements; they were like things to be seen only in the holyday of Nature, so glorious and so fresh was their youth, their beauty, and their love. They seemed out of place in the harsh and every-day earth; they belonged of right to the Saturnian age, and the dreams of demigod and nymph. It was as if the poetry of life gathered and fed itself in them, and in their hearts were concentrated the last rays of the Sun of Delos and of Greece.

But if Ione was independent in her choice of life, so was her modest pride proportionably vigilant and easily alarmed. The falsehood of the Egyptian was invented by a deep knowledge of her nature. The story of coarseness — of indelicacy in Glaucus stung her to the quick. She felt it a reproach upon her character and her career, a punishment above all to her love; she felt for the first time how suddenly she had yielded to that love; she blushed with shame at a weakness the extent of which she was startled to perceive; she imagined it was that weakness which had incurred the contempt of Glaucus; she endured the bitterest curse of noble natures — *humiliation*! Yet her love, perhaps, was no less alarmed than her pride. If one moment she murmured reproaches upon Glaucus — if one moment she renounced, she almost hated him — at the next she burst into passionate tears, her heart yielded to its softness, and she said in the bitterness of anguish, "He despises me — he does not love me!"

From the hour the Egyptian had left her, she had retired to her most secluded chamber — she had shut out her handmaids — she had denied herself to the crowds that besieged her door. Glaucus was excluded with the rest; he wondered, but he guessed not why! He never attributed to his Ione — his queen — his goddess — that womanlike caprice of which the love-poets of Italy so unceasingly complain. He imagined her, in the majesty of her candour, above all the arts that torture. He was troubled,

but his hopes were not dimmed, for he knew already that he loved and was beloved ; what more could he desire, as an amulet against fear ?

At deepest night, then, when the streets were hushed and the high moon only beheld his devotions, he stole to that temple of his heart — her home ;* and wooed her after the beautiful fashion of his country. He covered her threshold with the richest garlands, in which every flower was a volume of sweet passion, and he charmed the long summer night with the sound of the Lycian lute, and verses which the inspiration of the moment sufficed to weave.

But the window above opened not ; no smile made yet more holy the shining air of night. All was still and dark. He knew not if his verse was welcome, and his suit was heard.

Yet Ione slept not, nor disdained to hear. Those soft strains ascended to her chamber ; they soothed — they subdued her. While she listened, she believed nothing against her lover ; but when they were still at last, and his step departed, the spell ceased ; and, in the bitterness of her soul, she almost conceived in that delicate flattery a new affront.

I said she was denied to all ; but there was one exception — there was one person who would not be denied, assuming over her actions and her house something like the authority of a parent ; Arbaces, for himself, claimed an exemption from all the ceremonies observed by others. He entered the threshold with the license of one who feels that he is privileged and at home. He made his way to her solitude, and with that sort of quiet and unapologetic air which seemed to consider the right as a thing of course. With all the independence of Ione's character, his art had enabled him to obtain a secret and powerful control over her mind. She could not shake it off ; sometimes she desired to do so, but she never actively struggled against it. She was fascinated by his serpent eye. He arrested, he commanded her, by the magic of a mind long accustomed to awe and to subdue. Utterly unaware of his real character, or his hidden love, she felt for him the reverence which genius feels for wisdom, and virtue for sanctity. She regarded him as one of those mighty sages of old, who attained to the mysteries of knowledge by an exemption from the passions of their kind. She scarcely considered him as a being like herself of the earth, but as an oracle at once dark and sacred. She did not love him, but she feared. His presence was unwelcome to her ; it dimmed her spirit even in her brightest mood ; he seemed, with his chilling and lofty aspect, like some eminence which casts a shadow over the sun. But she never thought of forbidding his visits. She was passive under the influence which created in her breast, not the repugnance, but something of the stillness, of terror.

Arbaces himself now resolved to exert all his arts to possess himself of that treasure he so burningly coveted. He was cheered and elated by his conquest over her brother. From the hour in which Apæcides fell beneath the voluptuous sorcery of that fête which we have described, he felt his empire over the young priest triumphant and ensured. He knew that there is no victim so thoroughly subdued as a young and fervent man for the first time delivered to the thralldom of the senses.

When Apæcides recovered, with the morning light, from the profound sleep which succeeded to the delirium of wonder and of pleasure, he was, it is true, ashamed—terrified—appalled. His vows of austerity and celibacy echoed in his ear ; his thirst after holiness—had it been quenched at so unhallowed a stream ? But Arbaces knew well the means by which to confirm his conquest. From the arts of pleasure he led the young priest at once to those of his mysterious wisdom. He bared to his amazed eyes the initiatory secrets of the sombre philosophy of the Nile—those secrets

* *Athenæus* — "The true temple of Cupid is the house of the beloved one."

plucked from the stars, and the wild chymistry which, in those days, when reason herself was but the creature of imagination, might well pass for the lore of a diviner magic. He seemed to the young eyes of the priest as a being above mortality, and endowed with supernatural gifts. That yearning and intense desire for the knowledge which is not of earth—which had burned from his boyhood in the heart of the priest—was dazzled, until it confused and mastered his clearer sense. He gave himself to the art which thus addressed at once the two strongest of human passions, that of pleasure and that of knowledge. He was loath to believe that one so wise could err—that one so lofty could stoop to deceive. Entangled in the dark web of metaphysical moralities, he caught at the excuse by which the Egyptian converted vice into a virtue. His pride was insensibly flattered that Arbaces had daigned to rank him with himself—to set him apart from the laws which bound the vulgar—to make him an august participator both in the mystic studies and the magic fascinations of his solitude. The pure and stern lessons of that creed to which Olinthus had sought to make him convert were swept away from his memory by the deluge of new passions; and the Egyptian, who was versed in the articles of that true faith, and who soon learned from his pupil the effect which had been produced upon him by its believers, sought, not unskillfully, to undo that effect by a tone of reasoning half sarcastic and half earnest.

"This faith," said he, "is but a borrowed plagiarism, from one of the many allegories invented by our priests of old. Observe," he added, pointing to a hieroglyphical scroll—"observe, in these ancient figures, the origin of the Christian's Trinity. Here are also three Gods—the Deity—the Spirit—and the Son. Observe that the epithet of the Son is 'Saviour,'—observe that the sign by which his human qualities are denoted is the cross.* Note here, too, the mystic history of Osiris, how he put on death—how he lay in the grave, and how, thus fulfilling a solemn atonement, he rose again from the dead! In these stories we but design to paint an allegory from the operations of nature and the evolutions of the eternal heavens. But, the allegory unknown, the types themselves have furnished to credulous nations the materials of many creeds. They have travelled to the vast plains of India; they have mixed themselves up in the visionary speculations of the Greek. Becoming more and more gross and imbodied as they emerge farther from the shadows of their antique origin, they have assumed a human and palpable form in this novel faith; and the believers of Galilee are but the unconscious repeaters of one of the superstitions of the Nile!"

This was the last argument which completely subdued the priest. It was necessary to him, as to all, to believe in something; and undivided, and at last unreluctant, he surrendered himself to that belief which Arbaces inculcated, and which all that was human in passion—all that was flattering in vanity—all that was alluring in pleasure—served to invite to, and contributed to confirm.

This conquest thus easily made, the Egyptian could now give himself wholly up to the pursuit of a far dearer and mightier object; and he hailed in his success with the brother an omen of his triumph over the sister.

He had seen Ione on the day following the revel we have witnessed, and which was also the day after he had poisoned her mind against his rival. The next day and the next he saw her also, and each time he laid himself out with consummate art, partly to confirm her impression against Glaucus, and principally to prepare her for the impressions he desired her to receive.

* The believer will draw from this vague coincidence a very different corollary from that of the Egyptian.

The proud Ione took care to conceal the anguish she endured ; and the pride of woman has an hypocrisy which can deceive the most penetrating, and shame the most astute. But Arbaces was no less cautious not to recur to a subject which he felt it was the most politic to treat as of the lightest importance. He knew that by dwelling much upon the fault of a rival, you only give him dignity in the eyes of your mistress ; the wisest plan is, neither loudly to hate, nor bitterly to condemn : the wisest plan is, to lower him by an indifference of tone, as if you could not dream that he could be loved. Your safety is in concealing the wound to your own pride, and imperceptibly alarming that of the umpire, whose voice is fate ! Such, in all times, will be the policy of one who knows the science of the sex—it was now the Egyptian's.

He recurred no more then to the presumption of Glaucus : he mentioned his name, but not more often than that of Clodius or of Lepidus. He affected to class them together, as things of a low and ephemeral species ; as things wanting nothing of the butterfly save its innocence and its grace. Sometimes he slightly alluded to some invented debauch, in which he declared them companions : sometimes he reverted to them as the antipodes of those lofty and spiritual natures to whose order that of Ione belonged. Blinded alike by the pride of Ione, and perhaps by his own, he dreamed not that she already loved ; but he dreaded lest she might have formed for Glaucus the first fluttering prepossessions that lead to love ; and, secretly, he ground his teeth in rage and jealousy, when he reflected on the youth, the fascinations, and the brilliancy of that formidable rival he pretended to undervalue.

It was on the fourth day from the date of the close of the previous book that Arbaces and Ione sat together.

"You wear your veil at home," said the Egyptian ; "that is not fair to those whom you honour with your friendship."

"But to Arbaces," answered Ione, who, indeed, had cast the veil over her features to conceal eyes red with weeping—"to Arbaces, who looks only to the mind, what matters it that the face is concealed ?"

"I do look only to the mind," replied the Egyptian ; "show me then your face—for there I shall see it."

"You grow gallant in the air of Pompeii," said Ione, with a forced tone of gayety.

"Do you think, fair Ione, that it is only at Pompeii that I have learned to value you ?" The Egyptian's voice trembled—he paused for a moment, and then resumed :

"There is a love, beautiful Greek, which is not the love only of the thoughtless and the young—there is a love which sees not with the eyes, which hears not with the ears ; but in which soul is enamoured of soul. The countryman of thy ancestors, the cave-nursed Plato, dreamed of such a love—his followers have sought to imitate it ; but it is a love that is not for the herd to echo—it is a love that only high and noble natures can conceive—it has nothing in common with the sympathies and ties of coarse affection—wrinkles do not revolt it—the homeliness of feature does not deter—it asks youth, it is true—but it asks it only in the freshness of the emotions—it asks beauty, it is true—but it is the beauty of the thought, and of the spirit. Such is the love, O Ione, which is a worthy offering to thee, from the cold and the austere. Austere and cold thou deemest me—such is the love that I venture to lay upon thy shrine—thou canst receive it without a blush."

"And its name is friendship !" replied Ione : her answer was innocent, yet it sounded like the reproof of one conscious of the design of the speaker.

"Friendship !" said Arbaces, vehemently ; "no, that is a word too often

profaned, to apply to a sentiment so sacred! Friendship! it is a tie that binds fools and profligates! Friendship! it is the bond that unites the frivolous hearts of a Glaucus and a Clodius! Friendship! no, *that* is an affection of earth, of vulgar habits and sordid sympathies: the feeling of which I speak is borrowed from the stars;* it partakes of that mystic and ineffable yearning which we feel when we gaze on them—it burns, yet it purifies—it is the lamp of naphtha in the alabaster vase; glowing with fragrant odours, but shining only through the purest vessels. No, it is not love, and it is not friendship, that Arbaces feels for Ione. Give it no name—earth has no name for it; it is not of earth—why debase it with earthly epithets and earthly associations!"

Never before had Arbaces ventured so far, yet he felt his ground step by step; he knew that he uttered a language which, if at this day of affected Platonism would speak unequivocally to the ears of beauty, was at that time strange and unfamiliar, to which no precise idea could be attached, from which he could imperceptibly advance or recede, as occasion suited—as hope encouraged, or fear deterred. Ione trembled, though she knew not why; her veil hid her features, and masked an expression which, if seen by the Egyptian, would have at once damped and enraged him; in fact, he never was more displeasing to her; the harmonious modulation of the most suasive voice that ever disguised unhallowed thought, fell discordantly on her ear. Her whole soul was still filled with the image of Glaucus; and the accent of tenderness from another only revolted and dismayed; yet she did not conceive that any passion more ardent than that Platonism which Arbaces expressed, lurked beneath his words. She thought that he in truth spoke only of the affection and sympathy of the soul; but was it not precisely that affection and that sympathy which had made a part of those emotions she felt for Glaucus? and could any other footstep than his approach the haunted adytus of her heart?

Anxious at once to change the conversation, she replied, therefore with a cold and indifferent voice, "Whomsoever Arbaces honours with the sentiments of esteem, it is natural that his elevated wisdom should colour that sentiment with its own hues; it is natural that his friendship should be purer than that of others, whose pursuits and errors he does not deign to share. But tell me, Arbaces, hast thou seen my brother of late? he has not visited me for several days, and when I last saw him, his manner disturbed and alarmed me much: I fear lest he was too precipitate in the severe choice he has adopted, and that he repents an irrevocable step."

"Be cheered, Ione," replied the Egyptian; "it is true that some little time since he was troubled and sad of spirit; those doubts beset him which were likely to haunt one of that fervent temperament which ever ebbs and flows, and vibrates between excitement and exhaustion. But *he*, Ione, *he* came to me in his anxieties and his distress; he sought one who pitied and loved him. I have calmed his mind; I have removed his doubts; I have taken him from the threshold of wisdom into its temple; and before the majesty of the goddess, his soul is hushed and soothed. Fear not, he will repent no more; they who trust themselves to Arbaces never repent but for a moment."

"You rejoice me," answered Ione: "my dear brother! in his contentment I am happy."

The conversation then turned upon lighter subjects; the Egyptian exerted himself to please, he condescended even to entertain; the vast variety of his knowledge enabled him to adorn and light up every subject on which he touched; and Ione, forgetting the displeasing effect of his former words, was carried away, despite her sadness, by the magic of his intellect. Her

* Plato.

manner became unrestrained, and her language fluent; and Arbaces, who had waited his opportunity, now hastened to seize it.

"You have never seen," said he, "the interior of my home; it may amuse you to do so: it contains some rooms that may explain to you what you have often asked me to describe—the fashion of an Egyptian house; not, indeed, that you will perceive in the poor and minute proportions of Roman architecture, the massive strength, the vast space, the gigantic magnificence, or even the domestic construction, of the palaces of Thebes and Memphis; but something there is, here and there, that may serve to express to you some notion of that antique civilization which has humanized the world. Devote, then, to the austere friend of your youth, one of these bright summer evenings, and let me boast that my gloomy mansion has been honoured with the presence of the admired Ione."

Unconscious of the pollutions of the mansion,—of the danger that awaited her, Ione readily assented to the proposal: the next evening was fixed for the visit; and the Egyptian, with a serene countenance and a heart beating with fierce and unholy joy, departed. Scarce had he gone, when another visitor claimed admission—but now we return to Glaucus.

CHAPTER V.

THE POOR TORTOISE—NEW CHANGES FOR NYDIA.

THE morning sun shone over the small and odorous garden enclosed within the peristyle of the house of the Athenian. He lay reclined, sad and listlessly, on the smooth grass which intersected the viridarium; and a slight canopy stretched above broke the fierce rays of the summer sun.

When that fairy mansion was first disinterred from the earth, they found in the garden the shell of a tortoise that had been its inmate.* That animal, so strange a link in the creation, to whom Nature seems to have denied all the pleasures of life, save life's passive and dreamlike perception, had been the guest of the place for years before Glaucus purchased it; for years, indeed, which went beyond the memory of man, and to which tradition assigned an almost incredible date. The house had been built and rebuilt—its possessors had changed and fluctuated—generations had flourished and decayed—and still the tortoise dragged on its slow and unsympathizing existence. In the earthquake which, sixteen years before, had overthrown many of the public buildings of the city, and scared away the amazed inhabitants, the house now inhabited by Glaucus had been terribly shattered. The possessors deserted it for many days; on their return they cleared away the ruins which encumbered the viridarium, and found still the tortoise, unharmed and unconscious of the surrounding destruction. It seemed to bear a charmed life in its languid blood and imperceptible motions; yet was it not so inactive as it seemed; it held a regular and monotonous course: inch by inch it traversed the little orbit of its domain, taking months to accomplish the whole gyration. It was a restless voyager, that tortoise!—patiently and with pain did it perform its self-appointed journeys, evincing no interest in the things around it—a philosopher concentrated in itself! There was something grand in its solitary selfishness! the sun in which it basked—the waters poured daily over it—the air which it insensibly inhaled—were its sole and unfailing luxuries. The mild changes of the seasons in that lovely clime affected it not. It covered itself with its shell, as the saint in his piety—as the sage in his wisdom—as the lover in his hope.

* I do not know whether it be still preserved, (I hope so,) but the shell of a tortoise was found in the house appropriated, in this work, to Glaucus.

It was impervious to the shocks and mutations of time—it was an emblem of time itself; slow—regular—perpetual; unwitting of the passions that fret themselves around—of the wear and tear of mortality. The poor tortoise!—nothing less than the bursting of volcanoes, the convulsions of the riven world, could have quenched its sluggish spark! The inexorable death, that spared not pomp nor beauty, passed unheeding by a thing to which death could bring so insignificant a change.

For this animal the mercurial and vivid Greek felt all the wonder and affection of contrast. He could spend hours in surveying its creeping progress, in moralizing over its mechanism. He despised it in joy—he envied it in sorrow.

Regarding it now as he lay along the sward, its dull mass moving while it seemed motionless, the Athenian murmured to himself,—

“The eagle dropped a stone from his talons, thinking to break thy shell; the stone crushed the head of a poet. This is the allegory of fate! dull thing! Thou hadst a father and a mother; perhaps, ages ago, thou thyself hadst a mate. Did thy parents love, or didst thou? Did thy slow blood circulate more gladly when thou hast crept to the side of thy wedded one? Wert thou capable of affection? Could it distress thee if she was away from thy side? Couldst thou feel when she was present? What would I not give to know the history of thy mailed breast—to gaze upon the mechanism of thy faint desires—to mark what hair-breadth difference separates thy sorrow from thy joy? Yet, methinks, thou wouldst know if Ione were present! Thou wouldst feel her coming like a happier air, like a gladder sun. I envy thee now, for thou knowest not that she is absent; and I—would I could be like thee—between the intervals of seeing her! What doubt, what presentiment haunts me! why will she not admit me? Days have passed since I heard her voice. For the first time life grows flat to me. I am as one who is left alone at a banquet, the lights dead and the flowers faded. Ah! Ione, couldst thou dream how I adore thee!”

From these enamoured reveries Glaucus was interrupted by the entrance of Nydia. She came with her light, though cautious step, along the marble tablinum. She passed the portico, and paused at the flowers which bordered the garden. She had her water-vase in her hand, and she sprinkled the thirsting plants, which seemed to brighten at her approach. She bent to inhale their odour. She touched them timidly and caressingly. She felt along their stems, if any withered leaf or creeping insect marred their beauty. And as she hovered from flower to flower, with her earnest and youthful countenance and graceful motions, you could not have imagined a fitter handmaid for the goddess of the garden.

“Nydia, my child,” said Glaucus.

At the sound of his voice she paused at once—listening, blushing, breathless; with her lips parted, her face upturned to catch the direction of the sound—she laid down the vase—she hastened to him—and wonderful it was to see how unerringly she threaded her dark way through the flowers, and came by the shortest path to the side of her new lord.

“Nydia,” said Glaucus, tenderly stroking back her long and beautiful hair—“it is now three days since thou hast been under the protection of my household gods. Have they smiled on thee? Art thou happy?”

“Ah! so happy!” sighed the slave.

“And now,” continued Glaucus, “that thou hast recovered somewhat from the hateful recollections of thy former state; and now that they have fitted thee” (touching her brodered tunic) “with garments more meet for thy delicate shape; and now, sweet child, that thou hast accustomed thyself to a happiness, which may the gods grant thee ever, I am about to pray at thy hands a boon.”

"Oh! what can I do for thee?" said Nydia, clasping her hands.

"Listen," said Glaucus, "and young as thou art, thou shalt be my confidant. Hast thou ever heard the name of Ione?"

The blind girl gasped for breath, and turning pale as one of the statues which shone upon them from the peristyle, she answered, with an effort, and after a moment's pause—

"Yes, I have heard that she is of Neapolis, and beautiful."

Beautiful! her beauty is a thing to dazzle the day! Neapolis! nay, she is Greek by origin—Greece only could furnish forth such shapes. Nydia, — I love her!"

"I thought so," replied Nydia, calmly.

"I love, and thou shalt tell her so. I am about to send thee to her. Happy Nydia, thou wilt be in her chamber—thou wilt drink the music of her voice—thou wilt bask in the sunny air of her presence!"

"What! what! wilt thou then send me from thee?"

"Thou wilt go to Ione," answered Glaucus, in a tone that said, "What more canst thou desire?"

Nydia burst into tears.

Glaucus, raising himself, drew her towards him with the soothing caresses of a brother.

"My child, my Nydia, thou weapest in ignorance of the happiness I bestow on thee. She is gentle, and kind, and soft as the breeze of spring. She will be a sister to thy youth; she will appreciate thy winning talents; she will love thy simple graces as none other could, for they are like her own. Weepst thou still? fond fool! I will not force thee, sweet. Wilt thou not do for me this kindness?"

"Well, if I can serve thee, command. See, I weep no longer. I am calm."

"That is my own Nydia," continued Glaucus, kissing her hand. "Go then to her; if thou art disappointed in her kindness—if I have deceived thee, return when thou wilt! I do not give thee to another, I but lend. My home ever be thy refuge, sweet one. Ah! would it could shelter all the friendless and distressed; but, if my heart whispers truly, I shall claim thee again soon, my child. My home and Ione's will become the same, and thou shalt dwell with both."

A shiver passed through the slight frame of the blind girl, but she wept no more—she was resigned.

"Go then, my Nydia, to Ione's house—they shall show thee the way. Take her the fairest flowers thou canst pluck; the vase which contains them I will give thee; thou must excuse its unworthiness. They shall take, too, with thee the lute that I gave thee yesterday, and from which thou knowest so well to awaken the charming spirit. Thou shalt give her also this letter; in which, after a hundred efforts, I have embodied something of my thoughts. Let thy ear catch every accent, every modulation of her voice, and tell me, when we meet again, if its music should flatter me or discourage. It is now, Nydia, some days since I have been admitted to Ione; there is something mysterious in this exclusion. I am distracted with doubts and fears; learn, for thou art quick, and thy care for me will sharpen tenfold the acuteness; learn the cause of this unkindness; speak of me as often as thou canst; let my name come ever to thy lips; insinuate how I love rather than proclaim it; watch if she sighs while thou speakest, if she answer thee—or if she reprove, in what accents she reprove. Be my friend, plead for me, and oh! how vastly wilt thou overpay the little I have done for thee. Thou comprehendest, Nydia, thou art yet a child: have I said more than thou canst understand?"

"No."

"And thou wilt serve me?"

"Yes."

"Come to me when thou hast gathered the flowers, and I will give thee the vase I spake of; seek me in the chamber of Leda: pretty one, thou dost not grieve now."

"Glaucus, I am a slave, what business have I with grief or joy?"

"Sayest thou so! No, Nydia, be free. I give thee freedom — enjoy it as thou wilt, and pardon me that I reckoned on thy desire to serve me."

"You are offended. Oh! I would not for that which no freedom can give offend you, Glaucus; my guardian, my saviour, my protector, forgive the poor blind girl! She does not grieve even in leaving thee, if she can contribute to thy happiness."

"May the gods bless this grateful heart," said Glaucus, greatly moved; and unconscious of the fires he excited, he repeatedly kissed her forehead.

"Thou forgivest me," said she, "and thou wilt talk no more of freedom; my happiness is to be thy slave; thou hast promised thou wilt not give me to another."

"I have promised."

"And now, then, I will gather the flowers."

Silently Nydia took from the hand of Glaucus the costly and jewelled vase, in which the flowers vied with each other in hue and fragrance; tearlessly she received his parting admonition. She paused for a moment when his voice ceased — she did not trust herself to reply — she sought his hand — she raised it to her lips, dropped her veil over her face, and passed at once from his presence. She paused again as she reached the threshold — she stretched her hands towards it and murmured, —

"Three happy days — days of unspeakable delight — have I known since I passed thee — blessed threshold! — may peace dwell ever with thee when I am gone. And now, my heart tears itself from thee, and the only sound it utters bids me — die!"

CHAPTER VI.

THE HAPPY BEAUTY AND THE BLIND SLAVE.

A SLAVE entered the chamber of Ione. A messenger from Glaucus desired to be admitted.

Ione hesitated an instant.

"She is blind, that messenger," said the slave; "she will do her commission to none but thee."

Base is that heart which does not respect affliction. The moment she heard the messenger was blind, Ione felt the impossibility of returning a chilling reply. Glaucus had chosen a herald that was indeed sacred — a herald that could not be denied.

"What can he want with me? — what message can he send?" and the heart of Ione beat quick. The curtain across the door was withdrawn, — a soft and echoless step fell upon the marble, — and Nydia, led by one of the attendants, entered with her precious gift.

She stood still a moment, as if listening for some sound that might direct her.

"Will the noble Ione," said she, in a soft and low voice, "deign to speak, that I may know whither to steer these benighted steps, and that I may lay my offerings at her feet?"

"Fair child," said Ione, touched, and soothingly, "give not thyself the pain to cross these slippery floors, my attendant will bring to me what thou hast to present;" and she motioned to the handmaid to take the vase.

"I may give them to none but thee," answered Nydia, and guided by her

ear, she walked slowly to the place where Ione sat, and kneeling when she came before her, proffered the vase.

Ione took it from her hand, and placed it on the table at her side. She then raised her gently, and would have seated her on the couch, but the girl modestly resisted.

"I have not yet discharged my office," said she; and she drew the letter of Glaucus from her vest. "This will, perhaps, explain why he who sent me chose so unworthy a messenger to Ione."

The Greek took the letter with a hand, the trembling of which Nydia at once felt and sighed to feel. With folded arms and downcast looks, she stood before the proud and stately form of Ione; — no less proud, perhaps, in her attitude of submission. Ione waved her hand and the attendants withdrew; she gazed again upon the form of the young slave in surprise and beautiful compassion; then retiring a little from her, she opened and read the following letter: —

"Glaucus to Ione sends more than he dares to utter. Is Ione ill? thy slaves tell me 'No,' and that assurance comforts me. Has Glaucus offended Ione? — ah! that question I may not ask from *them*. For five days I have been banished from thy presence. Has the sun shone? — I know it not: has the sky smiled? — it has had no smile for me. My sun and my sky are Ione. Do I offend thee? Am I too bold? Do I say that on the tablet which my tongue has hesitated to breathe? Alas! it is in thine absence that I feel most the spells by which thou hast subdued me. And absence, that deprives me of joy, brings me courage. Thou wilt not see me; thou hast banished also the common flatterers that flock around thee. Canst thou confound me with them? It is not possible! Thou knowest too well that I am not of them — that their clay is not mine. For even were I of the humblest mould, the fragrance of the rose has penetrated me, and the spirit of thy nature hath passed within me, to embalm, to sanctify, to inspire. Have they slandered me to thee, Ione? Thou wilt not believe them. Did the Delphic oracle itself tell me thou wert unworthy, I would not believe it: and am I less incredulous than thou? I think of the last time we met — of the song which I sang to thee — of the look that thou gavest me in return. Disguise it as thou wilt, Ione, there is something kindred between us, and our eyes acknowledged it, though our lips were silent. Deign to see me, to listen to me, and after that exclude me if thou wilt. I meant not so soon to say I loved. But those words rush to my heart — they will have way. Accept, then, my homage and my vows. We met first at the shrine of Pallas; shall we not meet before a softer and a more ancient altar?

"Beautiful! adored Ione! If my hot youth and my Athenian blood have misguided and allured me, they have but taught my wanderings to appreciate the rest — the haven they have attained. I hang up my dripping robes on the sea-god's shrine. I have escaped shipwreck. I have found thee. Ione, deign to see me; thou art gentle to strangers, wilt thou be less merciful to those of thine own land? I await thy reply. Accept the flowers which I send — their sweet breath has a language more eloquent than words. They take from the sun the odours they return — they are the emblem of the love that receives and repays tenfold — the emblem of the heart that drank thy rays, and owes to thee the germ of the treasures that it proffers to thy smile. I send these by one that thou wilt receive for her own sake, if not for mine. She, like us, is a stranger; her father's ashes lie under brighter skies; but less happy than we, she is blind and a slave. Poor Nydia! I seek as much as possible to repair to her the cruelties of Nature and of fate, in asking permission to place her with thee. She is gentle, quick, and docile. She is skilled in music and the song; and she is a very Chloris* to the

* The Greek Flora.

flowers. She thinks, Ione, that thou wilt love her ; if thou dost not, send her back to me.

"One word more. Let me be bold, Ione. Why thinkest thou so highly of yon dark Egyptian ; he hath not about him the air of honest men ? We Greeks learn mankind from our cradle ; we are not the less profound, in that we affect no sombre mien ; our lips smile, but our eyes are grave — they observe — they note — they study. Arbaces is not one to be credulously trusted : can it be that he hath wronged me to thee ? I think it, for I left him with thee ; thou sawest how my presence stung him, since then, thou hast not admitted me. Believe nothing that he can say to my disfavour ; if thou dost, tell me so at once ; for this Ione owes to Glaucus. Farewell ! This letter touches thine hand ; these characters meet thine eyes — shall they be more blessed than he who is their author. Once more, farewell !"

It seemed to Ione, as she read this letter, as if a mist had fallen from her eyes. What had been the supposed offence of Glaucus ? that he had not really loved ! And now, plainly, and in no dubious terms, he confessed that love. From that moment his power was fully restored. At every tender word in that letter, so full of romantic and trustful passion, her heart smote her. And had she doubted his faith ? and had she believed another ? and had she not, at least, allowed to him the culprit's right, to know his crime, — to plead in his defence ? The tears rolled down her cheeks — she kissed the letter — she placed it in her bosom ; and turning to Nydia, who stood in the same place, and in the same posture —

"Wilt thou sit, my child," said she, "while I write an answer to this letter ?"

"You will answer it then ?" said Nydia, coldly ; "well, the slave that accompanied me will take back your answer."

"For you," said Ione, "stay with me — trust me, your service shall be light."

Nydia bowed her head.

"What is your name, fair girl ?"

"They call me Nydia."

"Your country ?"

"The land of Olympus — Thessaly."

"Thou shalt be to me a friend," said Ione, caressingly, "as thou art already half a countrywoman. Meanwhile, I beseech thee, stand not on these cold and glassy marbles. There ! now thou art seated, I can leave thee for an instant."

"Ione to Glaucus greeting, — come to me, Glaucus," wrote Ione ; "come to me to-morrow — I may have been unjust to thee ; but I will tell thee, at least, the fault that has been imputed to thy charge. Fear not, henceforth, the Egyptian — fear none. Thou sayest thou hast expressed too much — alas ! in these hasty words I have already done so — fare well !"

As Ione reappeared with the letter, which she did not dare to read after she had written — (Ah ! common rashness, common timidity of love !) — Nydia started from her seat.

"You have written to Glaucus ?"

"I have."

"And will he thank the messenger who gives to him thy letter ?"

Ione forgot that her companion was blind ; she blushed from the brow to the neck, and remained silent.

"I mean this," added Nydia, in a calmer tone ; "the lightest word of coldness from thee will sadden him — the lightest kindness will rejoice. If it be the first, let the slave take back thine answer ; if it be the last, let me — I will return this evening."

"And why, Nydia," asked Ione, evasively, "wouldst thou be the bearer of my letter?"

"It is so, then?" said Nydia. "Ah! how could it be otherwise? who could be unkind to Glaucus?"

"My child," said Ione, a little more reservedly than before, "thou speakest warmly — Glaucus, then, is amiable in thine eyes?"

"Noble Ione! Glaucus has been that to me which neither fortune nor the gods have been — a friend!"

The sadness mingled with dignity with which Nydia uttered these simple words, affected the beautiful Ione; she bent down and kissed her. "Thou art grateful, and deservedly so; why should I blush to say that Glaucus is worthy of thy gratitude. Go, my Nydia — take to him thyself this letter — but return again. If I am from home when thou returnest — as this evening, perhaps, I shall be — thy chamber shall be prepared next my own. Nydia, I have no sister — wilt thou be one to me?"

The Thessalian kissed the hand of Ione, and then said, with some embarrassment,

"One favour, fair Ione — may I dare to ask it?"

"Thou canst not ask what I will not grant," replied the Neapolitan.

"They tell me," said Nydia, "that you are beautiful beyond the loveliness of earth. Alas! I cannot see that which gladdens the world! Wilt thou suffer me then to pass my hand over thy face — that is my sole criterion of beauty, and I usually guess aright?"

She did not wait for the answer of Ione, but as she spoke, gently and slowly passed her hand over the bending and half-averted features of the Greek — features which but one image in the world can yet depicture and recall — that image is the mutilated but all wondrous statue in her native city — her own Neapolis; — that Parian face, before which all the beauty of the Florentine Venus is poor and earthly — that aspect so full of harmony — of youth — of genius — of the soul — which modern speculators have supposed the representation of Psyche.*

Her touch lingered over the braided hair and polished brow — over the downy and damask cheek — over the dimpled lip — the swanlike and whitest neck. "I know now that thou art beautiful," she said, "and I can picture thee to my darkness, henceforth and for ever!"

When Nydia left her, Ione sank into a deep but delicious reverie. Glaucus then loved her; he owned it — yes, he loved her. She drew forth again that dear confession; she paused over every word; she kissed every line; she did not ask why he had been maligned, she only felt assured that he had been so. She wondered how she had ever believed a syllable against him; she wondered how the Egyptian had been enabled to exercise a power against Glaucus; she felt a chill creep over her as she again turned to his warning against Arbaces, and her secret fear of that gloomy being darkened into awe. She was awakened from these thoughts by her maidens, who came to announce to her that the hour appointed to visit Arbaces was arrived; she started, — she had forgotten the promise. Her first impression was to renounce it; her second was to laugh at her own fears of her eldest surviving friend. She hastened to add the usual ornaments to her dress, and doubtful whether she should yet question the Egyptian more closely with respect to his accusation of Glaucus, or whether she should wait till, without citing the authority, she should insinuate to Glaucus the accusation itself, she took her way to the gloomy mansion of Arbaces.

* The wonderful remains of the statue, called so in the Museo Borbonico. The face, for sentiment and for feature, is the most beautiful of all which ancient sculpture has bequeathed to us.

CHAPTER VII.

IONE ENTRAPPED — THE MOUSE TRIES TO GNAW THE NET.

"O DEAREST Nydia!" exclaimed Glaucus, as he read the letter of Ione, "whitest-robed messenger that ever passed between earth and heaven! how, how shall I thank thee?"

"I am rewarded," said the poor Thessalian.

"To-morrow, to-morrow! how shall I while the hours till then?"

The enamoured Greek would not let Nydia escape him, though she sought several times to leave the chamber; he made her recite to him over and over again every syllable of the brief conversation that had taken place between her and Ione; a thousand times forgetting her misfortune, he questioned her of the looks, of the countenance of his beloved; and then quickly again excusing his fault, he bade her recommence the whole recital which he had thus interrupted. The hours thus painful to Nydia passed rapidly and delightedly to him, and the twilight had already darkened ere he once more dismissed her to Ione with a fresh letter and with new flowers. Scarcely had she gone, than Clodius and several of his gay companions broke in upon him; they rallied him on his seclusion during the whole day, and his absence from his customary haunts; they invited him to accompany them to the various resorts in that lively city, which night and day proffered diversity to pleasure. Then as now in the south (for no land perhaps losing more of greatness has retained more of custom) it was the delight of the Italians to assemble at the evening; and under the porticoes of temples or the shade of the groves that interspersed the streets, listening to music or the recitals of some inventive tale-teller, they hailed the rising moon with libations of wine and the melodies of song. Glaucus was too happy to be unsocial; he longed to cast off the exuberance of joy that oppressed him. He willingly accepted the proposal of his comrades, and laughingly they sallied out together down the populous and glittering streets.

In the mean time Nydia once more gained the house of Ione, who had long left it; she inquired indifferently whither she had gone.

The answer arrested and appalled her.

"To the house of Arbaces — of the Egyptian! Impossible!"

"It is true, my little one," said the slave who had replied to her question.

"She has known the Egyptian long."

"Long! ye gods! yet Glaucus loves her!" murmured Nydia to herself.

"And has," asked she aloud, "has she often visited him before?"

"Never till now," answered the slave: "if all the rumoured scandal of Pompeii be true, it would be better, perhaps, if she had not ventured there at present. But she, poor mistress mine, hears nothing of that which reaches us; the talk of the vestibulum reaches not to the peristyle.*"

"Never till now?" repeated Nydia. "Art thou sure?"

"Sure, pretty one; — but what is that to thee or to us?"

Nydia hesitated a moment, and then putting down the flowers with which she had been charged, she called to the slave who had accompanied her, and left the house without saying another word.

Not till she had got half-way back to the house of Glaucus did she break silence, and even then she only murmured inly:

"She does not dream, she cannot, of the dangers into which she has

* Terence.

plunged. Fool that I am ! shall I save her ? — yes, for I love Glaucus better than myself."

When she arrived at the house of the Athenian, she learned that he had gone out with a party of his friends, and none knew whither. He probably would not be home before midnight.

The Thessalian groaned ; she sank upon a seat in the hall, and covered her face with her hands as if to collect her thoughts. " There is no time to be lost," thought she, starting up. She turned to the slave who had accompanied her.

" Knowest thou," said she, " if Ione has any relative, any intimate friend at Pompeii ?"

" Why, by Jupiter," answered the slave, " art thou silly enough to ask the question ! Every one in Pompeii knows that Ione has a brother who, young and rich, has been — under the rose I speak — so foolish as to become a priest of Isis."

" A priest of Isis ! O gods ! His name ?"

" Apæcides."

" I know it all," muttered Nydia : " brother and sister then are to be both victims ! Apæcides ! yes, that was the name I heard in —. Ha ! he well, then, knows the peril that surrounds his sister. I will to him."

She sprang up at that thought, and taking the staff which always guided her steps, she hastened to the neighbouring shrine of Isis. Till she had been under the guardianship of the kindly Greek, that staff had sufficed to conduct the poor blind girl from corner to corner of Pompeii. Every street, every turning in the more frequented parts, was familiar to her ; and as the inhabitants entertained a tender and half superstitious veneration for those subject to her infirmity, the passengers had always given way to her timid steps. Poor girl ! she little dreamed that she should, ere many days passed, find her blindness her protection, and a guide far safer than the keenest eyes.

But since she had been under the roof of Glaucus he had ordered a slave to accompany her always, and the poor devil thus appointed, who was somewhat of the fattest, and who, after having twice performed the journey to Ione's house, now saw himself condemned to a third excursion (whither the gods only knew,) hastened after her, deploring his fate, and solemnly assuring Castor and Pollux that he believed the blind girl had the talaria of Mercury as well as the infirmity of Cupid.

Nydia, however, required but little of his assistance to find the way to the popular temple of Isis ; the space before it was now deserted, and she won without obstacle to the sacred rails.

" There is no one here," said the fat slave ; " what dost thou want, or whom ? knowest thou not that the priests do not live in the temple ?"

" Call out," said she, impatiently : " night and day there is always one Flamen at least watching in the shrines of Isis."

The slave called, — no one appeared.

" Seest thou no one ?"

" No one."

" Thou mistakest ; I hear a sigh : look again."

The slave, wondering and grumbling, cast round his heavy eyes, and before one of the altars, whose remains still crowd the narrow space, he beheld a form bending as in meditation.

" I see a figure," said he, " and by the white garments it is a priest."

" O Flamen of Isis !" cried Nydia ; " servant of the Most Ancient, hear me !"

" Who calls ?" said a low and melancholy voice.

" One who has no common tidings to impart to a member of your body ; I come to declare, and not to ask oracles."

"With whom wouldst thou confer? this is no hour for thy conference; depart, disturb me not: the night is sacred to the gods, the day to men."

"Methinks I know thy voice; thou art he whom I seek; yet I have heard thee speak but once before. Art thou not the priest Apæcides?"

"I am that man," replied the priest, emerging from the altar and approaching the rail.

"Thou art? the gods be praised!" Waving her hand to the slave, she bade him withdraw to a distance, and he, who naturally imagined some superstition, connected perhaps with the safety of Ione, could alone lead her to the temple, obeyed and seated himself on the ground at a little distance. "Hush!" said she, speaking quick and low; "art thou indeed Apæcides?"

"If thou knowest me, canst thou not recall my features?"

"I am blind," answered Nydia; "my eyes are in my voice, and *that* recognises thee; yet swear that thou art he."

"By the gods I swear it, by my right hand, and by the moon."

"Hush! speak low—bend near—give me thy hand; knowest thou Arbaces?—Hast thou laid flowers at the feet of the dead?—Ah! thy hand is cold—hark yet!—hast thou taken the awful vow?"

"Who art thou, whence comest thou, pale maiden?" said Apæcides, fearfully; "I know thee not,—thine is not the breast on which this head hath lain; I have never seen thee before."

"But thou hast heard my voice: no matter, those recollections it should shame us both to recall. Listen, thou hast a sister."

"Speak! speak!—what of her?"

"Thou knowest the banquets of the dead, stranger; it pleases thee, perhaps, to share them; would it please thee to have thy sister a partaker—would it please thee that Arbaces was her host?"

"O gods! he dare not! Girl, if thou mockest me, tremble. I will tear thee limb from limb."

"I speak the truth: and while I speak, Ione is in the halls of Arbaces—for the first time his guest. Thou knowest if there be peril in that first time! Farewell! I have fulfilled my charge."

"Stay! stay!" cried the priest, passing his wan hand over his brow; "if this be true, what, what can be done to save her! They may not admit me. I know not all the mazes of that intricate mansion. O Nemesis! justly am I punished!"

"I will dismiss yon slave; be thou my guide and comrade; I will lead thee to the private door of the house: I will whisper to thee the word which admits. Take some weapon—it may be needful."

"Wait an instant," said Apæcides, retiring into one of the cells that flank the temple, and reappearing in a few moments wrapped in a large cloak, which was then much worn by all classes, and which concealed his sacred dress. "Now," he said, grinding his teeth, "if Arbaces hath dared to—but he dare not! he dare not! Why should I suspect him? Is he so base a villain? I will not think it; yet, sophist! dark bewilderer that he is. O gods, protect!—hush! are there gods? Yes, there is one goddess, at least, whose voice I can command; and that is—Vengeance!"

Muttering these disconnected thoughts, Apæcides, followed by his silent and sightless companion, hastened through the most solitary paths to the house of the Egyptian.

The slave, abruptly dismissed by Nydia, shrugged his shoulders, muttered an adjuration, and, nothing loath, rolled off to his cubiculum.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE SOLITUDE AND SOLILOQUY OF THE EGYPTIAN — HIS CHARACTER ANALYZED.

WE must go back a few hours in the progress of our story. At the first gray dawn of the day, which Glaucus had already marked with white, the Egyptian was seated sleepless and alone on the summit of the lofty and pyramidal tower which flanked his house. A tall parapet around it served as a wall, and conspired, with the height of the edifice and the gloomy trees that girded the mansion, to defy the prying eyes of curiosity or observation. A table, on which lay a scroll filled with mystic figures, was before him. On high the stars waxed dim and faint, and the shades of night melted from the sterile mountain tops; only above Vesuvius there rested a deep and massy cloud, which for several days past had gathered darker and more solid over its summit. The struggle of night and day was more visible over the broad ocean, which stretched calm, like a gigantic lake; and bounded by the circling shores that, covered with vines and foliage, and gleaming here and there with the white walls of sleeping cities, sloped to the scarce rippling waves.

It was the hour, above all others, most sacred to the daring and antique art of the Egyptian; the art which would read our changeful destinies in the stars.

He had filled his scroll, he had noted the moment and the sign; and leaning upon his hand, he had surrendered himself to the thoughts which his calculation excited.

"Again do the stars forewarn me? Some danger, then, assuredly awaits me!" said he, slowly; "some danger, violent and sudden in its nature. The stars wear for me the same mocking menace which, if our chronicles do not err, they once wore for Pyrrhus — for him, doomed to strive for all things — to enjoy none; — restless, agitated, fated — all attacking, nothing gaining — battles without fruit, laurels without triumph, fame without success; at last made craven by his own superstitions, and slain like a dog by a tile from the hand of an old woman! Verily, the stars flatter when they give me a type in this fool of war — when they promise to the ardour of my wisdom the same results as to the madness of his ambition — perpetual exercise — no certain goal — the Sisyphus task, the mountain and the stone! — the stone, a gloomy image! it reminds me that I am threatened with somewhat of the same death as the Epirote. Let me look again. 'Beware!' say the shining prophets, 'how thou passest under ancient roofs, or besieged walls, or overhanging cliffs; a stone hurled from above, is charged by the curses of Destiny against thee!' And at no distant date from this comes the peril; but I cannot of a certainty read the day and hour. Wall! if my glass runs low, the sands shall sparkle to the last. Yet if I 'scape this peril — ay, if I 'scape — bright and clear as the moonlight track along the waters glows the rest of my existence. I see honours, happiness, success, shining upon every billow of the dark gulf beneath which I must sink at last. What, then: with such destinies *beyond* the peril, shall I succumb to the peril? My soul whispers hope, it sweeps exultingly beyond the boding hour, it revels in the future — its own courage is its fittest omen. If I were to perish so suddenly and so soon, the shadow of death would darken over me, and I should feel the icy presentiment of my doom. My soul, that so smiles within me, would express in sadness and in gloom, its forecast of the dreary Orcus. It smiles — it assures me of deliverance."

As he thus concluded his soliloquy, the Egyptian involuntarily rose. He paced rapidly the narrow space of that star-roofed floor, and, pausing at the parapet, looked again upon the gray and melancholy heavens. The chills of the faint dawn came refreshingly upon his brow, and gradually his mind resumed its natural and collected calm. He withdrew his gaze from the stars, as one after one they receded into the depths of heaven; and his eyes fell over the broad expanse below. Dim in the silenced port of the city rose the masts of the galleys; along that mart of luxury and of labour was stilled the mighty hum. No lights, save here and there from before the columns of a temple, or in the porticoes of the voiceless forum, broke the wan and fluctuating light of the struggling morn. From the heart of the torpid city — so soon to vibrate with a thousand passions — there came no sound; the streams of life circulated not; they lay locked and torpid under the ice of sleep. From the huge space of the amphitheatre, with its stony seats rising one above the other — coiled and round as some slumbering monster — rose a thin and ghastly mist, which gathered darker and more dark over the scattered foliage that gloomed in its vicinity. The city seemed as, after the awful change of seventeen ages, it seems now to the traveller, — a City of the Dead.*

The ocean itself — that serene and tideless sea — lay scarce less hushed, save that from its deep bosom came, softened by the distance, a faint and regular murmur, like the breathing of its sleep; and curving far, as with outstretched arms, into the green and beautiful land, it seemed unconsciously to clasp to its breast the cities sloping to its margin — Stabim, and Herculaneum, and Pompeii — those children and darlings of the deep.

"Ye slumber," said the Egyptian, as he scowled over the cities, the boast and flower of Campania; "ye slumber! — would it were the eternal repose of death! As ye now — jewels in the crown of empire — so once were the cities of the Nile! Their greatness hath perished from them — they sleep amid ruins — their palaces and their shrines are tombs — the serpent coils in the grass of their streets — the lizard basks in their solitary halls. By that mysterious law of Nature which humbles one to exalt the other, ye have thriven upon their ruins — thou, haughty Rome, hast usurped the glories of Sesostris and Semiramis — thou art a robber, clothing thyself with their spoils! And these — slaves in thy triumph — that I (the last son of forgotten monarchs) survey below, reservoirs of thine all-pervading power and luxury, I curse as I behold! The time shall come when Egypt shall be avenged! when the Barbarian's steed shall make his manger in the Golden House of Nero; and thou that hast sown the wind with conquest, shalt reap the harvest in the whirlwind of desolation."

As the Egyptian uttered a prediction which Fate so fearfully fulfilled, a more solemn and boding image of ill omen never occurred to the dreams of painter or of poet. The morning light, which can pale so wanly even the young cheek of beauty, gave his majestic and stately features almost the colours of the grave, with the dark hair falling massively around them, and the dark robes flowing long and loose — and the arm outstretched from that lofty eminence — and the glittering eyes, fierce with a savage gladness, — half prophet and half fiend!

He turned his gaze from the city and the ocean — before him lay the vineyards and meadows of the rich Campania. The gate and walls — ancient, half Pelasgic — of the city, seemed not to bound its extent. Villas and villages stretched on every side up the ascent of Vesuvius, not nearly then so steep or so lofty as at present. For as Rome itself is built on an exhausted volcano, so in similar security the inhabitants of the south tenanted

* When Sir Walter Scott visited Pompeii with Sir William Gell, almost his only remark was the exclamation, "The City of the Dead — the City of the Dead!"

the green and vineclad places around a volcano, whose fires they believed at rest for ever. From the gate stretched the long Street of Tombs, various in size and architecture, by which, on that side, the city is yet approached. Above all rose the cloud-capt summit of the Dread Mountain, with the shadows now dark, now light, betraying the mossy caverns and ashy rocks, which testified the past conflagrations, and might have prophesied — but man is blind — that which was to come!

Difficult was it then and there to guess the causes why the tradition of the place wore so gloomy and stern a hue; why, in those smiling plains, for miles around—to Baiæ and Misenum—the poets had imagined the entrance and threshold of their hell—their Acheron, and their fabled Styx: why in those Phlegræ,* now laughing with the vine, they placed the battles of the gods, and supposed the daring Titans to have sought the victory of heaven—save indeed that yet, in yon seared and blasted summit, fancy might think to read the characters of the Olympian thunderbolt.

But it was neither the rugged height of the still volcano, nor the fertility of the sloping fields, nor the melancholy avenue of tombs, nor the glittering villas of a polished and luxurious people, that now arrested the eye of the Egyptian. On one part of the landscape, the mountain of Vesuvius descended to the plain in a narrow and uncultivated ridge, broken here and there by jagged crags and copses of wild foliage. At the base of this lay a marshy and unwholesome pool, long since dried; and the intent gaze of Arbaces caught the outline of some living form moving by the marshes, and stooping ever and anon as if to pluck its rank produce.

“Ho!” said he aloud, “I have then another companion in these unworldly night-watches. The Witch of Vesuvius is abroad. What, doth she, too—as the credulous imagine—doth she, too, learn the lore of the great stars? Hath she been uttering foul magic to the moon, or culling (as her pauses betoken) foul herbs from the venomous marsh? Well, I must see this fellow-labourer. Whoever strives to know—learns that no human lore is despicable. Despicable only you—ye fat and bloated things—slaves of luxury—sluggards in thought—who, cultivating nothing but the barren sense, dream that its poor soil can produce alike the myrtle and the laurel. No, the wise only can enjoy!—to us only *true* luxury is given, when mind, brain, invention, experience, thought, learning, imagination, all contribute like rivers to swell the seas of *SENSE*!—Ione!”

As Arbaces uttered that last and charmed word, his thoughts sunk at once into a more deep and profound channel. His steps paused, he took not his eyes from the ground; once or twice he smiled joyously, and then as he turned from his place of vigil, and sought his couch, he muttered, “If death frowns so near, I will say at least that I have lived—Ione shall be mine.”

The character of Arbaces was one of those intricate and varied webs, in which even the mind that sat within it was sometimes confused and perplexed. In him, the son of a fallen dynasty, the outcast of a sunken people, was that spirit of discontented pride, which ever rankles in one of a sterner mould, who feels himself inexorably shut from the sphere in which his fathers shone, and to which nature as well as birth no less entitled himself. This sentiment hath no benevolence; it wars with society, it sees enemies in mankind. But with this sentiment did not go its common companion, poverty. Arbaces possessed wealth which equalled that of most of the Roman nobles. And this enabled him to gratify to the utmost the passions which had no outlet in business or ambition. Travelling from clime to clime, and beholding still Rome everywhere, he increased both his hatred of society and his passion for pleasure. He was in a vast prison, which,

* Or Phlegræi campi; viz. scorched or burned fields.

however, he could fill with the ministers of luxury. He could not escape from the prison, and his only object therefore was to give it the character of the palace. The Egyptians, from the earliest time, were devoted to the joys of sense; Arbaces inherited both their appetite for sensuality and the glow of imagination which struck light from its rottenness. But still, unsocial in his pleasures as in his graver pursuits, and brooking neither superior nor equal, he admitted few to his companionship save the willing slaves of his profligacy. He was the solitary lord of a crowded harem. But withal, he felt condemned to that satiety which is the constant curse of men whose intellect is above their pursuits, and that which once had been the impulse of passion froze down to the ordinance of custom. From the disappointments of sense he sought to raise himself by the cultivation of knowledge, but as it was not his object to serve mankind, so he despised that knowledge which is practical and useful. His dark imagination loved to exercise itself in those more visionary and obscure researches which are ever the most delightful to a wayward and solitary mind, and to which he himself was invited by the daring pride of his disposition, and the mysterious traditions of his clime. Dismissing faith in the confused creeds of the heathen world, he reposed the greatest faith in the power of human wisdom. He did not know, perhaps no one in that age distinctly did, the limits which Nature imposes upon our discoveries. Seeing that the higher we mount in knowledge the more wonders we behold, he imagined that Nature not only worked miracles in her ordinary course, but that she might, by the cabala of some master soul, be diverted from that course itself. Thus he pursued Science across her appointed boundaries, into the land of perplexity and shadow. From the truths of astronomy he wandered into astrologic fallacy. From the secrets of chymistry he passed into the spectral labyrinth of magic; and he who could be skeptical as to the power of the gods, was credulously superstitious as to the power of man.

The cultivation of magic, carried at that day to a singular height among the would-be-wise, was especially eastern in its origin; it was alien to the early philosophy of the Greeks, nor had it been received by them with favour until Oethanes, who accompanied the army of Xerxes, introduced among the simple credulities of Hellas the solemn superstitions of Zoroaster. Under the Roman emperors it had become however naturalized at Rome, — a meet subject for Juvenal's fiery wit. Intimately connected with magic was the worship of Isis, and the Egyptian religion was the means by which was extended the devotion to Egyptian sorcery. The theurgic or benevolent magic, the goetic, or dark and evil necromancy, were alike in pre-eminent repute during the first century of the Christian era; and the marvels of Faustus are not comparable to those of Apollonius. (a) Kings, courtiers, and sages, all trembled before the professors of

(a) "The marvels of Faustus are not comparable to those of Apollonius."

During the earlier ages of the Christian epoch, the heathen philosophy, especially of Pythagoras and of Plato, had become debased and adulterated, not only by the wildest mysticism, but the most chimerical dreams of magic. Pythagoras, indeed, scarcely merited a nobler destiny, for though he was an exceedingly clever man, he was a most prodigious mountebank, and was exactly formed to be the great father of a school of magicians. Pythagoras himself either cultivated magic or arrogated its attributes, and his followers told marvellous tales of his writing on the moon's disc, and appearing in several places at once. His golden rules and his golden thigh were in especial veneration in Magna Græcia, and out of his doctrines of occult numbers, his followers extracted numbers of occult doctrines. The most remarkable of the impostors who succeeded him was Apollonius of Tyana, referred to in the text. All sorts of prodigies accompanied the birth of this gentleman. Proteus, the Egyptian god, foretold to his mother yet pregnant, that it was he himself (Proteus) who was about to reappear in the world through her agency. After this Proteus might well be considered to possess the power of transformation! Apollonius knew the language of birds, read men's thoughts in their bosoms, and walked about with a familiar spirit. He was a devil of a fellow

the dread science. And not the least remarkable of his tribe was the formidable and profound Arbaces. His fame and his discoveries were known to all the cultivators of magic, they even survived himself; but it was not by his real and worldly name that he was honoured by the sorcerer and the sage. He received from their homage a more mystic appellation, and was long remembered in Magna Græcia, and the Eastern plains, by the name of "Hermes, the Lord of the Flaming Belt." His subtle speculations and boasted attributes of wisdom, recorded in various volumes, were among those tokens "of the curious arts" which the Christian converts most joyfully yet most fearfully burned at Ephesus, depriving posterity of the proofs of the cunning of the fiend.

The conscience of Arbaces was solely of the intellect — it was awed by no moral laws. If man imposed these checks upon the herd, so he believed that man, by superior wisdom, could raise himself above them. "If," he reasoned, "I have the genius to impose laws, have I not the right to command my own creations? Still more, have I not the right to control, to evade, to scorn, the fabrications of yet meaner intellects than my own?" Thus, if he were a villain, he justified his villany by what ought to have made him virtuous, namely, the elevation of his capacities.

As all men have more or less the passion of power, in Arbaces that passion corresponded exactly to his character. It was not the passion of an external and brute authority. He desired not the purple and the fasces, the insignia of vulgar command. His pride, his contempt for Rome, which made the world (and whose haughty name he regarded with the same disdain as that which Rome herself lavished upon the barbarian), would never have permitted him to aspire to sway over others, for that would have rendered him at once the tool or creature of the emperor. He, the son of the Great Race of Rameses — he execute the orders of, and receive his power from, another! — the mere notion filled him with rage. But in rejecting an ambition that coveted nominal distinctions, he but indulged the more in the ambition to rule the heart. Honouring mental power as the greatest of earthly gifts, he loved to feel that power palpably in himself, by extending it

with a devil, and induced a mob to stone a poor demon of venerable and mediant appearance, who, after the lapidary operation, changed into a huge dog. He raised the dead, passed a night with Achilles, and when Domitian was murdered, he called out aloud (though at Ephesus at the moment), "Strike the tyrant!" The end of so honest and great a man was worthy of his life. It would seem that he ascended into heaven. What less could be expected of one who had stoned the devil! Should any English writer meditate a new Faust, I recommend to him Apollonius.

But the magicians of *this* sort were Philosophers! — excellent men and pious; there were others of a far darker and deadlier knowledge, the followers of the Goetic magic, in other words, the black art. Both of these, the Goetic and the Theurgic, appear to be of Egyptian origin; and it is evident, at least, that their practitioners appeared to pride themselves on drawing their chief secrets from that ancient source; — and both are intimately connected with astrology. In attributing to Arbaces the knowledge and the repute of magic, as well as that of the science of the stars, I am therefore perfectly in accordance with the spirit of his time, and the circumstances of his birth. He is a characteristic of that age. At one time, I purposed to have developed and detailed more than I have done the pretensions of Arbaces to the mastery of his art, and to have initiated the reader into the various sorceries of the period. But as the character of the Egyptian grew upon me, I felt that it was necessary to be sparing of that machinery which, thanks to this five-shillings match of knowledge, every one now may fancy he can detect. Such as he is — Arbaces is become too much of an intellectual creation to demand a frequent repetition of the coarser and more physical materia of terror. I suffered him, then, merely to demonstrate his capacities in the elementary and obvious secrets of his craft, and leave the subtler magic he possesses to rest in mystery and shadow.

As to the witch of Vesuvius (who will be introduced to the reader hereafter), her spells and her filters, her cavern and its appliances, however familiar to us of the North, are faithful also to her time and nation. A witch of a lighter character, and manners less ascetic, the learned reader will remember with delight in the "Golden Ass" of Apuleius, and the reader who is not learned is recommended to the spirited translation of that enchanting romance by Taylor.

over all whom he encountered. Thus had he ever sought the young — thus had he ever fascinated and controlled them. He loved to find subjects in men's souls — to rule over an invisible and immaterial empire! — had he been less sensual and less wealthy, he might have sought to become the founder of a new religion: as it was, his energies were checked by his pleasures. Besides, however, the vague love of this moral sway, (vanity so dear to sages!) he was influenced by a singular and dream-like devotion to all that belonged to the mystic land his ancestors had swayed. Although he disbelieved in her deities, he believed in the allegories they represented (or rather he interpreted those allegories anew.) He loved to keep alive the *worship* of Egypt, because he thus maintained the shadow and the recollection of her *power*. He therefore loaded the altars of Osiris and of Isis with regal donations; and was ever anxious to dignify their priesthood by new and wealthy converts. The vow taken — the priesthood embraced — he usually chose the comrades of his pleasures from those whom he had made his victims, partly because he thus secured to himself their secrecy, partly because he thus yet more confirmed to himself his peculiar power. Hence the motives of his conduct to Apœcides, strengthened as these were, in that instance, by his passion for Ione.

He had seldom lived long in one place; but as he grew older, he grew more wearied of the excitement of new scenes, and he had sojourned among the delightful cities of Campania, for a period which surprised himself. In fact, his pride somewhat crippled his choice of residence. He could not live in those burning climes, which he deemed of right his own hereditary possession, and which now cowered, supine and sunken, under the wings of the Roman eagle. Rome herself was hateful to his indignant soul; nor did he love to find his riches rivalled by the minions of the court, and cast into comparative poverty by the mighty magnificence of the court itself. The Campanian cities proffered to him all that his nature craved; the luxuries of an unequalled clime; — the imaginative refinements of a voluptuous civilization. He was removed from the sight of a superior wealth; he was without rivals to his riches; he was free from the spies of a jealous court. As long as he was rich, none pried into his conduct. He pursued the dark tenor of his way undisturbed and secure.

It is the curse of sensualists never to love till the pleasures of sense begin to pall — their ardent youth is frittered away in countless desires; their hearts are exhausted. So, ever chasing love, and taught by a restless imagination to exaggerate, perhaps, its charms, the Egyptian had spent all the glory of his years without attaining the object of his desires. The beauty of to-morrow succeeded the beauty of to-day, and the shadows bewildered him in his pursuit of the substance. When, two years before the present date, he beheld Ione, he saw, for the first time, one whom he imagined he could *love*. He stood, then, upon that bridge of life, from which man sees before him distinctly a wasted youth on the one side, and the darkness of approaching age upon the other; a time in which we are more than ever anxious, perhaps, to secure to us, ere it be yet too late, whatever ye have been taught to consider necessary to the enjoyment of a life of which the brighter half is gone.

With an earnestness and a patience which he had never before commanded for his pleasures, Arbaces had devoted himself to win the heart of Ione. It did not content him to love, he desired to be loved. In this hope he had watched the expanding youth of the beautiful Neapolitan; and knowing the influence that the mind possesses over those who are taught to cultivate the mind, he had contributed willingly to form the genius and enlighten the intellect of Ione, in the hope that she would be thus able to appreciate what he felt would be his best claim to her affections, *viz.* a mind which, however criminal and perverted, was rich in its original

elements of strength and grandeur. When he felt that mind to be acknowledged, he willingly allowed, nay, encouraged her, to mix among the idle votaries of pleasure, in the belief that her soul, fitted for higher commune, would miss the companionship of his own, and that, in comparison with others, she would learn to love himself. He had forgot, that as the sunflower to the sun, so youth turns to youth, until his jealousy of Glaucus suddenly apprised him of his error. From that moment, though as ye have seen, he knew not the extent of his danger, a fiercer and more tumultuous direction was given to a passion long controlled. Nothing kindles the fire of love like a sprinkling of the anxieties of jealousy; it takes then a wilder, a more resistless flame; it forgets its softness; it ceases to be tender; it assumes something of the intensity, of the ferocity of hate.

Arbaces resolved to lose upon cautious and perilous preparations no longer time; he resolved to place an irrevocable barrier between himself and his rivals; he resolved to possess himself of the person of Ione; not that in his present love, so long nursed and fed by hopes purer than those of passion alone, he would have been contented with that mere possession. He desired the heart, the soul, no less than the beauty of Ione; but he imagined that once separated by a daring crime from the rest of mankind — once bound to Ione by a tie that slavery could not break, she would be driven to concentrate her thoughts in him — that his arts would complete his conquest, and that, according to the true moral of the Roman and the Sabine, the empire obtained by force would be cemented by gentler means. This resolution was yet more confirmed in him by his belief in the prophecies of the stars; they had long foretold to him this year, and even the present month, as the epoch of some dread disaster, menacing life itself. He was driven to a certain and limited date. He resolved to crowd, monarch-like, on his funeral pyre, all that his soul held most dear. In his own words, if he were to die he resolved to feel that he had lived, and that Ione should be his own!

CHAPTER VIII.

WHAT BECOMES OF IONE IN THE HOUSE OF ARBACES — THE FIRST SIGNAL OF THE WRATH OF THE DREAD FOX.

WHEN Ione entered the spacious hall of the Egyptian, the same awe which had crept over her brother impressed itself also upon her; there seemed to her, as to him, something ominous and warning in the still and mournful faces of those dread Theban monsters, whose majestic and passionless features the marble so well portrayed: —

“ Their looks, with the reach of past ages, were wise
And the soul of eternity thought in their eyes.”

The tall Ethiopian slave grinned as he admitted her, and motioned to her to proceed. Half way up the hall she was met by Arbaces himself, in festive robes, which glittered with jewels. Although it was broad day without, the mansion, according to the practice of the luxurious, was artificially darkened, and the lamps cast their still and odour-giving light over the rich floors and ivory roofs.

“ Beautiful Ione,” said Arbaces, as he bent to touch her hand; “ it is you that have eclipsed the day — it is your eyes that light up the halls — it is your breath which fills them with perfumes.”

“ You must not talk to me thus,” said Ione, smiling; “ you forget that

your love has sufficiently instructed my mind, to render these graceful flatteries to my person unwelcome. It was you who taught me to disdain adulation : will you unteach your pupil ?”

There was something so frank and charming in the manner of Ione, as she thus spoke, that the Egyptian was more than ever enamoured, and more than ever disposed to renew the offence he had committed ; he however answered quickly and gayly, and hastened to renew the conversation.

He led her through the various chambers of a house, which seemed to contain, to her eyes, unexperienced to other splendour than the minute elegance of Campanian cities, the treasures of the world.

In the walls were set pictures of inestimable art ; the lights shone over statues of the noblest age of Greece. Cabinets of gems, each cabinet itself a gem, filled up the interstices of the columns ; the most precious woods lined the thresholds and composed the doors ; gold and jewels seemed prodigalized all around. Sometimes they were alone in these rooms — sometimes they passed through silent rows of slaves, who, kneeling as she passed, proffered to her offerings of bracelets, of chains, of gems, which the Egyptian vainly entreated her to receive.

“ I have often heard,” said she, wonderingly, “ that you were rich ; but I never dreamed of the amount of your wealth.”

“ Would I could coin it all,” replied the Egyptian, “ into one crown, which I might place upon that snowy brow.”

“ Alas ! the weight would crush me ; I should be a second Tarpeia,” answered Ione, laughingly.

“ But thou dost not disdain riches — O, Ione ! they know not what life is capable of who are not wealthy. Gold is the great magician of earth — it realizes our dreams, it gives them the power of a god — there is a grandeur, a sublimity in its possession : it is the mightiest, yet the most obedient of our slaves.”

The artful Arbaces sought to dazzle the young Neapolitan by his treasures and his eloquence ; he sought to awaken in her the desire to be mistress of what she surveyed ; he hoped that she would confuse the owner with the possessions, and that the charms of his wealth would be reflected on himself. Meanwhile Ione was secretly somewhat uneasy at the gallantries which escaped from those lips, which, till lately, had seemed to disdain the common homage we pay to beauty. And with that delicate subtlety which women alone possess, she sought to ward off shafts deliberately aimed, and to laugh or to talk away the meaning from his warming language. Nothing in the world is more pretty than that same species of defense ; it is the charm of the African necromancer, who professed with a feather to turn aside the winds.

The Egyptian was intoxicated and subdued by her grace even more than by her beauty ; it was with difficulty that he suppressed his emotions ; alas ! the feather was only powerful against the summer-breezes, — it would be the sport of the storm.

Suddenly, as they stood in one hall which was surrounded by draperies of silver and white, the Egyptian clapped his hands, and, as if by enchantment, a banquet rose from the floor, — a couch or throne, with a crimson canopy, ascended simultaneously at the feet of Ione ; and at the same instant, from behind the curtains, swelled the invisible and softest music.

Arbaces placed himself at the feet of Ione, and children, young and beautiful as Loves, ministered to the feast.

The feast was done, the music sank into a low and subdued strain, and Arbaces thus addressed his beautiful guest : —

“ Hast thou never in this dark and uncertain world, — hast thou never aspired, my pupil, to look beyond — hast thou never wished to put aside the veil of fatality, and to behold on the shores of Fate the shadowy images

of things to be ? For it is not the past alone that has its ghosts ; each event *to come* has also its spectrum — its shade ; when the hour arrives life enters it, the shadow becomes corporeal, and walks the world. Thus, in the land beyond the grave, are ever two impalpable and spiritual hosts, the things to come, the things that have been ! If by our wisdom we can penetrate that land, we see the one as the other, and learn, as I have learned, not alone the mysteries of the dead, but also the destiny of the living.”

“As thou hast learned ! — can wisdom attain so far ?”

“Wilt thou prove my knowledge, Ione, and behold the representation of thine own fate ? It is a drama more striking than those of *Æschylus* — it is one I have prepared for thee, if thou wilt see the shadows perform their part.”

The Neapolitan trembled ; she thought of *Glaucus*, and sighed as well as trembled : — were their destinies to be united ? Half incredulous, half believing, half awed, half alarmed by the words of her strange host, she remained for some moments silent, and then answered, —

“It may revolt — it may terrify — the knowledge of the future will perhaps, only imbitter the present !”

“Not so, Ione ; I have myself looked upon thy future lot, and the ghosts of thy future bask in the gardens of *Elysium* ; amid the asphodel and the rose, they prepare the garlands of thy sweet destiny ; and the Fates, so harsh to others, weave only for thee the web of happiness and love. Wilt thou then come and behold thy doom, so that thou mayest enjoy it beforehand ?”

Again the heart of Ione murmured “*Glaucus* ;” she uttered a half audible assent ; the Egyptian rose, and taking her by the hand, he led her across the banquet-room — the curtains withdrew, as by magic hands, and the music broke forth in a louder and gladder strain ; they passed a row of columns, on either side of which fountains cast aloft their fragrant waters ; they descended by broad and easy steps into a garden. The eve had commenced ; the moon was already high in heaven ; and those sweet flowers that sleep by day, and fill, with ineffable odours, the airs of night, were thickly scattered amid alleys cut through the starlit foliage ; or, gathered in baskets, lay like offerings at the feet of the frequent statues that gleamed along their path.

“Whither wouldst thou lead me, Arbaces ?” said Ione wonderingly.

“But yonder,” said he, pointing to a small building which stood at the end of the vista. “It is a temple consecrated to the Fates — our rites require such holy ground.”

They passed into a narrow hall, at the end of which hung a sable curtain. Arbaces lifted it, Ione entered, and found herself in total darkness.

“Be not alarmed,” said the Egyptian, “the light will rise instantly ;” while he so spoke, a soft, and warm, and gradual light diffused itself around ; as it spread over each object, Ione fancied that she was in an apartment of moderate size, hung everywhere with black ; a couch of the same hue was beside her. In the centre of the room was a small altar, on which stood a tripod of bronze. At one side, upon a lofty column of granite, was a colossal head of the blackest marble, which she perceived by the crown of wheatears that encircled the brow, represented the great Egyptian goddess. Arbaces stood before the altar ; he had laid his garland on the shrine, and seemed occupied with pouring into the tripod the contents of a brazen vase ; suddenly from that tripod leaped into life a blue, quick, darting irregular flame ; the Egyptian drew back to the side of Ione, and muttered some words in a language unfamiliar to her ear ; the curtain at the back of the altar waved tremulously to and fro ; it parted slowly, and in the aperture which was thus made, Ione beheld an indistinct and pale landscape, which

gradually grew brighter and clearer as she gazed ; at length, she discovered plainly trees, and rivers, and meadows, and all the beautiful diversity of the richest earth. At length, before the landscape a dim shadow glided ; it rested opposite to Ione ; slowly the same charm seemed to operate upon it as over the rest of the scene ; it took form and shape, and, lo ! in its feature and in its form Ione beheld herself !

Then the scene behind the spectre faded away, and was succeeded by the representation of a gorgeous palace ; a throne was raised in the centre of its hall — the dim forms of slaves and guards were ranged around it, and a pale hand held over the throne the likeness of a diadem.

A new actor now appeared ; he was clothed from head to foot in a dark robe ; you saw neither his face nor the outline of his figure ; he knelt at the feet of the shadowy Ione, he clasped her hand — he pointed to the throne, as if to invite her to ascend it.

The Neapolitan's heart beat violently. " Shall the shadow disclose itself ? " whispered a voice beside her — the voice of Arbaces. " Ah, yes ! " answered Ione, softly.

Arbaces raised his hand — the spectre seemed to drop the mantle that concealed its form — and Ione shrieked ; it was Arbaces himself that thus knelt before her.

" This is indeed thy fate ! " whispered again the Egyptian's voice in her ear ; " and thou art destined to be the bride of Arbaces."

Ione started — the black curtain closed over the phantasmagoria ; and Arbaces himself, the real, the living Arbaces, was at her feet.

" Oh, Ione ! " said he, passionately gazing upon her ; " listen to one who has long struggled vainly with his love. I adore thee ! The fates do not lie — thou art destined to be mine ; I have sought the world around, and found none like thee. From my youth upward, I have sighed for such as thou art. I have dreamed till I saw thee — I awake, and I behold thee. Turn not away from me, Ione ; think not of me as thou hast thought ; I am not that being — cold, insensate, and morose — which I have seemed to thee. Never woman had lover so devoted — so passionate as I will be to Ione. Do not struggle in my clasp ; see, I release thy hand. Take it from me, if thou wilt ; well, be it so. But do not reject me, Ione — do not rashly reject ; judge of thy power over me, when thou canst thus transform. I, who never knelt to mortal being, kneel to thee. I, who have commanded fate, receive from thee my own. Ione, tremble not ; thou art my queen, my goddess — be my bride ! All the wishes thou canst form shall be fulfilled. The ends of the earth shall minister to thee — pomp, power, luxury, shall be thy slaves. Arbaces shall have no ambition, save the pride of obeying thee. Ione, turn upon me those eyes — shed upon me thy smile. Dark is my soul when thy face is hid from it ; shine over me, my sun, my heaven, my daylight ! Ione, Ione, do not reject my love ! "

Alone, and in the power of this singular and fearful man, Ione was not yet terrified ; the respect of his language, the softness of his voice, reassured her ; and in her own purity she felt protection. But she was confused — astonished ; it was some moments before she could recover the power of reply.

" Rise, Arbaces ! " said she, at length ; and she resigned to him once more her hand, which she as quickly withdrew again when she felt upon it the burning pressure of his lips : " rise ! and if thou art serious, if thy language be in earnest — "

" If ! " said he, tenderly.

" Well, then, listen to me : you have been my guardian, my friend, my monitor ; for this new character I was not prepared. Think not," she added quickly, as she saw his dark eyes glitter with the fierceness of his passion ; " think not that I scorn, that I am not touched, that I am not honoured, by this homage ; but say, canst thou hear me calmly ? "

"Ay, though thy words were lightning, and could blast me!"

"*I love another!*" said Ione, blushing, but in a firm voice.

"By the gods—by hell!" shouted Arbaces, rising to his fullest height; "dare not tell me that—dare not mock me; it is impossible! Whom hast thou seen—whom known? Oh, Ione! it is thy woman's invention—thy woman's art that speaks; thou wouldst gain time: I have surprised, I have terrified thee. Do with me as thou wilt—say that thou lovest not me,—but say not that thou lovest another!"

"Alas!" began Ione; and then, appalled before his sudden and unlooked-for violence, she burst into tears.

Arbaces came nearer to her—his breath glowed fiercely on her cheek; he wound his arms round her—she sprang from his embrace. In the struggle a tablet fell from her bosom on the ground; Arbaces perceived and seized it—it was the letter that morning received from Glaucus. Ione sank upon the couch, half dead with terror.

Rapidly the eyes of Arbaces ran over the writing; the Neapolitan did not dare to gaze upon him; she did not see the deadly paleness that came over his countenance—she marked not his writhing frown, nor the quivering of his lip, nor the convulsions that heaved his breast. He read it to the end, and then, as the letter fell from his hand, he said, in a voice of deceitful calmness,—

"Is the writer of this the man thou lovest?"

Ione sobbed, but answered not.

"Speak!" he rather shrieked than said.

"It is—it is."

"And his name—it is written here—his name is Glaucus!"

Ione, clasping her hands, looked round as for succour or escape.

"Then hear me," said Arbaces, sinking his voice into a whisper; "thou shalt go to thy tomb rather than to his arms. What, thinkest thou Arbaces will brook a rival such as this puny Greek! What, thinkest thou that he has watched the fruit ripen, to yield it to another! Pretty fool, no! Thou art mine—all—only mine—and thus—thus I seize and claim thee." As he spoke, he caught Ione in his arms; and in that ferocious grasp was all the energy—less of love than of revenge.

But to Ione despair gave supernatural strength; she again tore herself from him—she rushed to that part of the room by which she had entered—she half withdrew the curtain—he seized her—again she broke away from him—and fell exhausted, and with a loud shriek, at the base of the column which supported the head of the Egyptian goddess. Arbaces paused for a moment, as to regain his breath, and then once more darted upon his prey.

At that instant the curtain was rudely torn aside, the Egyptian felt a fierce and strong grasp upon his shoulder. He turned—he beheld before him the flashing eyes of Glaucus, and the pale, worn, but menacing countenance of Apæcides. "Ha!" he muttered, as he glared from one to the other; "what fury hath sent ye hither?"

"Até," answered Glaucus; and he closed at once with the Egyptian. Meanwhile Apæcides raised his sister, now lifeless, from the ground; his strength, exhausted by his long overwrought mind, did not suffice to bear her away, light and delicate though her shape: he placed her, therefore, on the couch, and stood over her with a brandished knife, watching the contest between Glaucus and the Egyptian, and ready to plunge his weapon in the bosom of Arbaces, should he be victorious in the struggle. There is, perhaps, nothing on earth so terrible as the naked and unarmed contest of animal strength, no weapon but those which nature supplies to rage. Both the antagonists were now locked in each other's grasp—the hand of each seeking the throat of the other—the face drawn back—the fierce eyes flashing—the muscles strained—the veins swelled—the lips

apart—the teeth set; both were strong beyond the ordinary power of men, both animated by relentless wrath; they coiled, they wound around each other; they rocked to and fro—they swayed from end to end of their confined arena; they uttered cries of ire and revenge; they were now before the altar—now at the base of the column where the struggle had commenced—they drew back for breath—Arbaces leaning against the column—Glaucus a few paces apart.

“O, ancient goddess,” exclaimed Arbaces, clasping the column, and raising his eyes towards the sacred image it supported, “protect thy chosen, proclaim thy vengeance against this thing of an upstart creed, who with sacrilegious violence profanes thy resting place and assails thy servant.”

As he spoke, the still and vast features of the goddess seemed suddenly to glow with life; through the black marble, as through a transparent veil, flushed luminously a crimson and burning hue—around the head played and darted coruscations of livid lightning—the eyes became like balls of livid fire, and seemed fixed in withering and intolerable wrath upon the countenance of the Greek. Awed and appalled by this sudden and mystic answer to the prayer of his foe—and not free from the hereditary superstitions of his race—the cheeks of Glaucus paled before that strange and ghastly animation of the marble; his knees knocked together—he stood, seized with a divine panic, dismayed, aghast, half unnerved before his foe! Arbaces gave him not breathing time to recover his stupor: “Die, wretch!” he shouted, in a voice of thunder, as he sprang upon the Greek; “the mighty Mother claims thee as a living sacrifice.” Taken thus by surprise in the first consternation of his superstitious fears, the Greek lost his footing—the marble floor was as smooth as glass—he slid—he fell. Arbaces planted his foot on the breast of his fallen foe. Apæcides, taught by his sacred profession, as well as by his knowledge of Arbaces, to distrust all miraculous interpositions, had not shared the dismay of his companion; he rushed forward, his knife gleamed in the air; the watchful Egyptian caught his arm as it descended; one wrench of his powerful hand tore the weapon from the weak grasp of the priest; one sweeping blow stretched him to the earth: with a loud and exulting yell, Arbaces brandished the knife on high. Glaucus gazed upon his impending fate with unwinking eyes, and in the stern and scornful resignation of a fallen gladiator; when, at that awful instant, the floor shook under them with a rapid and convulsive throë—a mightier spirit than that of the Egyptian was abroad!—a giant and crushing power, before which sunk into sudden impotence his passion and his arts. It woke—it stirred—that Dread Demon of the Earthquake—laughing to scorn alike the magic of human guile and the malice of human wrath. As a Titan on whom the mountains are piled, it roused itself from the sleep of years—it moved on its dædal couch—the caverns below groaned and trembled beneath the motion of its limbs. In the moment of his vengeance and his power, the self-prized demigod was humbled to his real clay. Far and wide along the soil went a hoarse and rumbling sound—the curtains of the chamber shook as at the blast of a storm—the altar rocked—the tripod reeled—and high over the place of contest the column trembled and waved from side to side; the sable head of the goddess tottered and fell from its pedestal; and as the Egyptian stooped above his intended victim, right upon his bended form, right between the shoulder and the neck, struck the marble mass!—the shock stretched him like the blow of death, at once suddenly, without sound, or motion, or semblance of life, upon the floor; apparently crushed by the very divinity he had impiously animated and invoked!

“The Earth has preserved her children,” said Glaucus, staggering to his feet. “Blessed be the dread convulsion! Let us worship the providence of the gods!” He assisted Apæcides to rise, and then turned upward

the face of Arbaces; it seemed locked as in death, blood gushed from the Egyptian's lips over his glittering robes; he fell heavily from the arms of Glaucus, and the red stream trickled slowly along the marble. Again the earth shook beneath their feet, they were forced to cling to each other; the convulsion ceased as suddenly as it came; they tarried no longer; Glaucus bore Ione lightly in his arms, and they fled from the unhallowed spot. But scarce had they entered the garden than they were met on all sides by flying and disordered groups of women and slaves, whose festive and glittering garments contrasted in mockery the solemn terror of the hour; they did not appear to heed the strangers—they were occupied only with their own fears. After the tranquillity of sixteen years, that burning and treacherous soil again menaced destruction. They uttered but one cry, "THE EARTHQUAKE! THE EARTHQUAKE!" And, passing unmolested from the midst of them, Apécides and his companions, without entering the house, hastened down one of the alleys, passed a small open gate, and there sitting on a little mound, over which gloomed the dark-green aloes, the moonlight fell on the bended figure of the blind girl,—she was weeping bitterly.

BOOK III.

Ἀλλὰ, Σελῶνα

Φαίνε καλὸν, τιν γὰρ κοταίσσομαι ἄσυχᾳ, δαῖμον
 Τῇ χθονίᾳ δ' Ἑκάτα τὰν καὶ σήλακες, τρομέοντι
 Ἐρχομένην νεκρῶν ἀνά τ' ἡῖρα, καὶ μέλαν αἷμα·
 Καίρ' Ἑκάτα δασπλήτι, καὶ ἐς Τέλος ἄμμιν ὁπάδει,
 Φάρμακα ταῦθ' ἔρδοισα χερσίονα μητε τι Κίρκης.

THEOCRITUS.

CHAPTER I.

THE FORUM OF THE POMPEIANS;—THE FIRST RUDE MACHINERY BY WHICH THE NEW ERA OF THE WORLD WAS WROUGHT.

It was early noon, and the forum was crowded, alike with the busy and the idle. As at Paris at this day, so at that time in the cities of Italy, men lived almost wholly out of doors—the public buildings—the forum—the porticoes—the baths—the temples themselves—might be considered their real homes; it was no wonder that they decorated so gorgeously these favourite places of resort, they felt for them a sort of domestic affection as well as a public pride. And animated was indeed the aspect of the forum of Pompeii at that time! Along its broad pavement, composed of large flags of marble, were assembled various groups conversing in that energetic fashion which appropriates a gesture to every word, and which is still the characteristic of the people of the south. Here, in seven stalls on one side the colonnade, sat the money-changers, with their glittering heaps before them, and merchants and seamen in various costumes crowding round their stalls. On one side, several men in long togas* were seen bustling rapidly

* For the lawyers and the clients, when attending on their patrons, retained the toga after it had fallen into disuse among the rest of the citizens.

up to a stately edifice where the magistrates administered justice — these were the lawyers — active, chattering, joking, and punning, as you may find them at this day in Westminster. In the centre of the space, pedestals supported various statues, of which the most remarkable was the stately form of Cicero. Around the court ran a regular and symmetrical colonnade of Doric architecture, and there several, whose business drew them early to the place, were taking the slight morning repast which made an Italian breakfast, talking vehemently on the earthquake of the preceding night, as they dipped pieces of bread in their cups of diluted wine. In the open space, too, you might perceive various petty traders exercising the arts of their calling. Here one man was holding out ribands to a fair dame from the country; another man was vaunting to a stout farmer the excellence of his shoes; a third, a kind of stall-restaurateur, still so common in the Italian cities, was supplying many a hungry mouth with hot messes from his small and itinerant stove. While — contrast strongly typical of the mingled bustle and intellect of the time — close by, a school-master was expounding to his puzzled pupils the elements of the Latin grammar.* A gallery above the portico, which was ascended by small wooden staircases, had also its throng, though, as here the immediate business of the place was mainly carried on, its groups wore a more quiet and serious air.

Every now and then the crowd below respectfully gave way as some senator swept along to the Temple of Jupiter, (which filled up one side of the forum, and was the senator's hall of meeting,) nodding with ostentatious condescension to such of his friends or clients as he distinguished among the throng. Mingling amid the gay dresses of the better orders you saw the hardy forms of the neighbouring farmers, as they made their way to the public granaries. Hard by the temple you caught a view of the triumphal arch and the long street beyond swarming with inhabitants; in one of the niches of the arch a fountain played, cheerily sparkling in the sunbeams; and above its cornice, strongly contrasting the gay summer skies, gloomed the bronzed and equestrian statue of Caligula. Behind the stalls of the money-changers was that building now called the Pantheon, and a crowd of the poorer Pompeians passed through the small vestibule which admitted to the interior, with panniers under their arms, pressing on towards a platform, placed between two columns, where such provisions as the priests had rescued from sacrifice were exposed for sale.

At one of the public edifices appropriated to the business of the city, workmen were employed upon the columns, and you heard the noise of their labour every now and then rising above the hum of the multitude; — *the columns are unfinished to this day!*

All, then, united, nothing could exceed in variety the costumes, the ranks, the manners, the occupations of the crowd; nothing could exceed the bustle, the gayety, the animation, the flow and flush of life all around. You saw there are all the myriad signs of a heated and feverish civilization; where pleasure and commerce, idleness and labour, avarice and ambition, mingled in one gulf their motley, rushing, yet harmonious streams.

Facing the steps of the Temple of Jupiter, with folded arms and a knit and contemptuous brow, stood a man of about fifty years of age. His dress was remarkably plain, not so much from its material as from the absence of all those ornaments which were worn by the Pompeians of every rank,

* In the museum at Naples is a picture little known, but representing one side of the forum at Pompeii as then existing, to which I am much indebted in the present description. It may afford a learned consolation to my younger readers to know that the ceremony of *hoisting* (more honoured in the breach than the observance) is of high antiquity, and seems to have been performed with all legitimate and public vigour in the forum of Pompeii.

partly from the love of show, partly also because they were chiefly wrought into those shapes deemed most efficacious in resisting the assaults of magic, and the influence of the evil eye.^(a) His forehead was high and bald, the few locks that remained at the back of the head were concealed by a sort of cowl, which made a part of his cloak, to be raised or lowered at pleasure, and was now drawn half-way over the head as a protection from the rays of the sun. The colour of his garments was brown, no popular hue with the Pompeians; all the usual admixtures of scarlet or purple seemed carefully excluded. His belt, or girdle, contained a small receptacle for ink, which hooked on to the girdle, a stylus, (or implement of writing,) and tablets of no ordinary size. What was rather remarkable, the cincture held no purse, which was the almost indispensable appertenance of the girdle, — even when that purse had the misfortune to be empty!

It was not often that the gay and egotistical Pompeians busied themselves with observing the countenances and actions of their neighbours; but there was that in the lip and eye of this bystander so remarkably bitter and disdainful, as the surveyed the religious procession sweeping up the stairs of the temple, that it could not fail to arrest the notice of many.

"Who is yon cynic?" asked a merchant of his companion, a jeweller.

"It is Olinthus," replied the jeweller, "a reputed Nazarene."

The merchant shuddered. "A dread sect!" said he, in a whispered and fearful voice. "It is said that, when they meet at nights, they always commence their ceremonies by the murder of a new-born babe: they profess a community of goods too — the wretches! — a community of goods! what

(a) "The influence of the evil eye."

This superstition, to which I have more than once alluded throughout this work, still flourishes in Magna Græcia, with scarcely diminished vigour. I remember conversing at Naples with a lady of the highest rank, and of intellect and information very uncommon among the noble Italians of either sex, when I suddenly observed her change colour, and make a rapid and singular motion with her finger. "My God, that man!" she whispered, tremblingly.

"What man?"

"See! the Count —! he has just entered."

"He ought to be much flattered to cause such emotion; doubtless he has been one of the signora's admirers."

"Admirer! Heaven forbid! He has the evil eye. His look fell full upon me. Something dreadful will certainly happen."

"I see nothing remarkable in his eyes."

"So much the worse. The danger is greater for being disguised. He is a terrible man. The last time he looked upon my husband, it was at cards, and he lost half his income at a sitting; his ill-luck was miraculous. The count met my little boy in the gardens, and the poor child broke his arm that evening. Oh! what shall I do? something dreadful will certainly happen — and, heavens! he is admiring my cap!"

"Does every one find the eyes of the count equally fatal, and his admiration equally exciting?"

"Every one — he is universally dreaded; and, what is very strange, he is so angry if he sees you avoid him!"

"That is very strange indeed! the wretch!"

At Naples the superstition works well for the jewellers — so many charms and talismans as they sell for the ominous fascination of the mal-occhio! In Pompeii the talismans were equally numerous, but not always of so elegant a shape, nor of so decorous a character. But generally speaking, a coral ornament was, as it now is, among the favourite avengers of the evil influence. The Thebans about Pontus were supposed to have an hereditary claim to this charming attribute, and could even kill grown up men with a glance. As for Africa, where the belief also still exists, certain families could not only destroy children, but wither up trees; they did this, not with curses, but praises. In our time, politicians have often possessed this latter faculty! and the moment they take to praising an institution, it is time to pray God for it. The *malus oculus* was not always different from the eyes of other people. But persons, especially of the fairer sex, with double pupils to the organ, were above all to be shunned and dreaded. The Illyrians were said to possess this fatal deformity. In all countries, even in the north, the eye has ever been held the chief seat of fascination; but now a days, ladies with a single pupil manage the work of destruction pretty easily; so much do we improve upon our forefathers!

would become of merchants or jewellers either, if such notions were in fashion?"

"That is very true," said the jeweller; "besides, they wear no jewels — they mutter imprecations when they see a serpent, and at Pompeii all our ornaments are serpentine."

"Do but observe," said a third, who was a fabricant of bronze, "how yon Nazarene scowls at the piety of the sacrificial procession. He is murmuring curses on the temple, be sure. Do you know, Celsinus, that this fellow, passing by my shop the other day, and seeing me employed on a statue of Minerva, told me with a frown, that had it been marble, he would have broken it; but the bronze was too strong for him. 'Break a goddess!' said I. 'A goddess!' answered the Atheist, 'it is a demon, an evil spirit.' Then he passed on his way, cursing. Are such things to be borne? What marvel that the earth heaved so fearfully last night, anxious to reject the Atheist from her bosom. An Atheist do I say? worse still — a scorner of the fine arts! — Wo to us fabricants of bronze, if such fellows as this give the law to society!"

"These are the incendiaries that burnt Rome, under Nero," groaned the jeweller.

While such were the friendly remarks provoked by the air and faith of the Nazarene, Olinthus himself became sensible of the effect he was producing; he turned his eyes round, and observed the intent faces of the accumulating throng, whispering as they gazed; and surveying them for a moment with an expression, first of defiance and afterward of compassion, he gathered his cloak round him, and passed on, muttering audibly, "De-luded idolaters! — did not last night's convulsion warn ye? Alas! how will ye meet the Last Day!"

The crowd that heard these boding words gave them different interpretations, according to their different shades of ignorance and of fear; all, however, concurred in imagining them to convey some awful imprecation. They regarded the Christian as the enemy of mankind; the epithets they lavished upon him, of which "Atheist" was the most favoured and frequent, may serve, perhaps, to warn us, believers of that same creed now triumphant, how we indulge the persecution of opinion Olinthus then underwent, and how we apply to those whose notions differ from our own, the terms at that day prodigalized on the fathers of our faith.

As Olinthus stalked through the crowd, and gained one of the more private places of egress from the forum, he perceived gazing upon him a pale and earnest countenance, which he was not slow to recognise.

Wrapped in a pallium that partially concealed his sacred robes, the young Apæcides surveyed the disciple of that new and mysterious creed, to which at one time he had been half a convert.

"Is he, too, an impostor? Does this man, so plain and simple in life, in garb, in mien — does he too, like Arbaces, make austerity the robe of the sensualist? Does the veil of Vesta hide the vices of the prostitute?"

Olinthus, accustomed to men of all classes, and combining with the enthusiasm of his faith a profound experience of his kind, guessed, perhaps by the index of the countenance, something of what passed within the breast of the priest. He met the survey of Apæcides with a steady eye, and a brow of serene and open candour.

"Peace be with thee!" said he, saluting Apæcides.

"Peace!" echoed the priest, in so hollow a tone that it went at once to the heart of the Nazarene.

"In that wish," continued Olinthus, "all good things are combined — without virtue thou canst not have peace. Like the rainbow, Peace rests upon the earth, but its arch is lost in heaven! Heaven bathes it in hues of light — it springs up amid tears and clouds, — it is a reflection of the Eter-

and Sun, — it is an assurance of calm, it is the sign of a great covenant between man and God. Such peace, O young man! is the smile of the soul; it is an emanation from the distant orb of immortal light. PEACE be with you!"

"Alas!" began Apæcides, when he caught the gaze of the curious loiterers, inquisitive to know what could possibly be the theme of conversation between a reputed Nazarene and a priest of Isis. He stopped short, and then added in a low tone — "We cannot converse here, I will follow thee to the banks of the river; there, is a walk which at this time is usually deserted and solitary."

Olinthus bowed assent. He passed through the streets with a hasty step, but a quick and observant eye. Every now and then he exchanged a significant glance, a slight sign, with some passenger, whose garb usually betokened the wearer to belong to the humbler classes. For Christianity was in this the type of all other and less mighty revolutions — the grain of mustard-seed was in the hearts of the lowly. Amid the huts of poverty and labour, the vast stream which afterward poured its broad waters beside the cities and palaces of earth, took its neglected source.

CHAPTER II.

THE NOONDAY EXCURSION ON THE CAMPANIAN SEAS.

"BUT tell me, Glaucus," said Ione, as they glided down the rippling Sarnus in their boat of pleasure, "how camest thou with Apæcides to my rescue from that bad man?"

"Ask Nydia yonder," answered the Athenian, pointing to the blind girl, who sat at a little distance from them, leaning pensively over her lyre — "She must have thy thanks, not we. It seems that she came to my house, and finding me from home, sought thy brother in his temple; he accompanied her to Arbaces; on their way they encountered me, with a company of friends whom thy kind letter gave me a spirit cheerful enough to join. Her quick ear detected my voice — a few words sufficed to make me the companion of Apæcides; I told not my associates why I left them — could I trust thy name to their light tongues and gossiping opinions? — Nydia led us to the garden gate, by which we afterward bore thee — we entered, and were about to plunge into the mysteries of that evil house, when we heard thy cry in another direction. Thou knowest the rest!"

Ione blushed deeply. She then raised her eyes to those of Glaucus, and he felt all the thanks she could not utter. "Come hither, my Nydia," said she, tenderly, to the Thessalian. "Did I not tell thee thou shouldst be my sister and friend? Hast thou not already been more — my guardian, my preserver!"

"It is nothing," answered Nydia, coldly, and without stirring.

"Ah! I forgot," continued Ione, "I should come to thee;" and she moved along the benches till she reached the place where Nydia sat, and flinging her arms caressingly round her, covered her cheeks with kisses.

Nydia was that morning paler than her wont, and her countenance grew even more wan and colourless as she submitted to the embrace of the beautiful Neapolitan. "But how camest thou, Nydia," whispered Ione, "to surmise so faithfully the danger I was exposed to? Didst thou know aught of the Egyptian?"

"Yes, I knew of his vices."

"And how?"

"Noble Ione, I have been a slave to the vicious — those whom I served were his minions."

"And thou hast entered his house, since thou knewest so well that private entrance?"

"I have played on my lyre to Arbaces," answered the Thessalian, with embarrassment.

"And thou hast escaped the contagion from which thou hast saved Ione?" returned the Neapolitan, in a voice too low for the ear of Glaucus.

"Noble Ione, I have neither beauty nor station; I am a child, and a slave, and blind. The despicable are ever safe."

It was with a pained, and proud, and indignant tone that Nydia made this humble reply, and Ione felt that she only wounded Nydia by pursuing the subject. She remained silent, and the bark now floated into the sea.

"Confess that I was right, Ione," said Glaucus, "in prevailing on thee not to waste this beautiful noon in thy chamber — confess that I was right."

"Thou wert right, Glaucus," said Nydia, abruptly.

"The dear child speaks for thee," returned the Athenian. "But permit me to move opposite to thee, or our light boat will be overbalanced."

So saying, he took his seat exactly opposite to Ione, and leaning forward, he fancied that it was her breath, and not the winds of summer, that flung fragrance over the sea.

"Thou wert to tell me," said Glaucus, "why for so many days thy door was closed to me?"

"Oh, think of it no more!" answered Ione, quickly; "I gave my ear to what I now know was the malice of slander."

"And my slanderer was the Egyptian?"

Ione's silence assented to the question.

"His motives are sufficiently obvious."

"Talk not of him," said Ione, covering her face with her hands, as if to shut out his very thought.

"Perhaps he may be already by the banks of the slow Styx," resumed Glaucus, "yet in that case we should probably have heard of his death. Thy brother, methinks, hath felt the dark influence of his gloomy soul. When we arrived last night at thy house, he left me abruptly. Will he ever vouchsafe to be my friend?"

"He is consumed with some secret care," answered Ione, tearfully. "Would that we could lure him from himself! Let us join in that tender office."

"He shall be my brother," returned the Greek.

"How calmly," said Ione, rousing herself from the gloom into which her thoughts of Apæcides had plunged her — "How calmly the clouds seem to repose in heaven; and yet you tell me, for I knew it not myself, that the earth shook beneath us last night."

"It did, and more violently, they say, than it has done since the great convulsion sixteen years ago: the land we live in yet nurses mysterious terror, and the reign of Pluto, which spreads beneath our burning fields, seems rent with unseen commotion. Didst thou not feel the earthquake, Nydia, where thou wert seated last night? and was it not the fear it occasioned thee that made thee weep?"

"I felt the soil creep and heave beneath me like some monstrous serpent," answered Nydia, "but as I saw nothing I did not fear; I imagined the convulsion to be a spell of the Egyptian's. They say he has power over the elements."

"Thou art a Thessalian, my Nydia," replied Glaucus, "and hast a national right to believe in magic."

"Magic — who doubts it?" answered Nydia, simply, "dost thou?"

"Until last night (when a necromantic prodigy did indeed appal me),

methinks I was not credulous in any other magic save that of love!" said Glaucus, in a tremulous voice, and fixing his eyes on Ione.

"Ah!" said Nydia, with a sort of shiver, and she woke mechanically a few pleasing notes from her lyre; the sound suited well the tranquillity of the waters, and the sunny stillness of the noon.

"Play to us, dear Nydia," said Glaucus—"play, and give us one of thine old Thessalian songs; whether it be of magic or not, as thou wilt—let it, at least, be of love!"

"Of love!" repeated Nydia, raising her large, wandering eyes, that ever thrilled those who saw them with a mingled fear and pity; you could never familiarize yourself to their aspect; so strange did it seem, that those dark, wild orbs were ignorant of the day; and either so fixed was their deep, mysterious gaze, or so restless and perturbed their glance, that you felt, when you encountered them, that same vague, and chilling, and half preternatural impression which comes over you in the presence of the insane,—of those who, having a life outwardly, like your own, have a life within life—dissimilar—unsearchable—unguess'd!

"Will you that I should sing of love?" said she, fixing those eyes upon Glaucus.

"Yes!" replied he, looking down.

She moved a little way from the arm of Ione, still cast round her, as if that soft embrace embarrassed; and placing her light and graceful instrument on her knee, after a short prelude, she sang the following strain:—

NYDIA'S LOVE-SONG.

1.

The Wind and the Beam loved the Rose,
And the Rose loved one;
For who recks the wind where it blows?
Or loves not the sun?

2.

None knew whence the humble Wind stole,
Poor sport of the skies—
None dream'd that the Wind had a soul,
In its mournful sighs!

3.

Oh! happy Beam—how canst thou prove,
That bright love of thine?
In thy light is the proof of thy love,
Thou hast but—to shine!

4.

How its love can the Wind reveal?
Unwelcome its sigh,
Mute—mute to its Rose let it steal—
Its proof is—to die!

"Thou singest but sadly, sweet girl," said Glaucus; "thy youth only feels as yet the dark shadow of love; far other inspiration doth he wake when he himself bursts and brightens upon us."

"I sing as I was taught," replied Nydia, sighing.

"Thy master was love-crossed, then—try thy hand at a gayer air. Nay, girl, give the instrument to me." As Nydia obeyed, her hand touched his, and, with that slight touch, her breast heaved—her cheek flushed—Ione

and Glaucus, occupied with each other, perceived not those signs of strange and premature emotions which preyed upon a heart, that, nourished by imagination, dispensed with hope.

And now, broad, blue, bright before them, spread that halcyon sea, fair as at this moment, seventeen centuries from that date, I behold it rippling on the same divinest shores. Clime, that yet enervates with a soft and Circæan spell — that moulds us insensibly, mysteriously into harmony with thyself, banishing the thought of austerer labour, the voices of wild ambition, the contests and the roar of life; — filling us with gentle and subduing dreams, making necessary to our nature that which is its least earthly portion, so that the very air inspires us with the yearning and thirst of love! Whoever visits thee, seems to leave earth and its harsh cares behind — to enter by the Ivory Gate into the Land of Dreams. The young and laughing Hours of the PRESENT — the Hours, those children of Saturn, which he hungers ever to devour, seem snatched from his grasp. The past — the future — are forgotten; we enjoy but the breathing time. Flower of the world's garden — Fountain of Delight — Italy of Italy — beautiful benign Campania! — vain were, indeed, the Titans, if, on this spot, they yet struggled for another heaven! Here, if God meant this working day-life for a perpetual holyday, who would not sigh to dwell for ever — asking nothing, hoping nothing, fearing nothing, while thy skies shone over him — while thy seas sparkled at his feet — while thine air brought him sweet messages from the violet and the orange — and while the heart, resigned to — beating with — but one emotion, could find the lips and the eyes that flatter it, (vanity of vanities!) that love can defy custom, and be eternal?

It was then in this clime — on these seas, that the Athenian gazed upon a face that might have suited the nymph, the spirit of the place. Feeding his eyes on the changeful roses of that softest cheek, happy beyond the happiness of common life, loving, and knowing himself beloved.

In the tale of human passion in past ages, there is something of interest, even in the remoteness of the time. We love to feel within us the bond which unites the most distant eras — men, nations, customs, perish; **THE AFFECTIONS ARE IMMORTAL!** — they are the sympathies which unite the ceaseless generations. The past lives again, when we look upon its emotions — it lives in our own! That which was, ever is! The magician's gift, that revives the dead — that animates the dust of forgotten graves, is not in the author's skill, it is in the heart of the reader!

Still vainly seeking the eyes of Ione, as half downcast, half averted, they shunned his own, the Athenian, in a low and soft voice, thus expressed the feelings inspired by happier thoughts than those which had coloured the song of Nydia.

THE SONG OF GLAUCUS

1.

As the bark floateth on o'er the summerlit sea,
Floats my heart o'er the deeps of its passion for thee;
All lost in the space, without terror it glides,
For, bright with thy soul is the face of the tides.
Now heaving, now hush'd, is that passionate ocean,
As it catches thy smile or thy sighs;
And the twin-stars* that shine on the wanderer's devotion
Its guide and its God — are thine eyes!

2.

The bark may go down, should the cloud sweep above,
For its being is bound to the light of thy love.

* In allusion to the Dioscuri, or twin-stars, the guardian Deity of the seaman.

As thy faith and thy smile are its life and its joy,
 So thy frown or thy change are the storms that destroy.
 Ah! sweeter to sink while the sky is serene,
 If time hath a change for thy heart!
 If to live be to weep over what thou hast been,
 Let me die while I know what thou art!

As the last words of the song trembled over the sea, Ione raised her looks, they met those of her lover. Happy Nydia!—happy in thy affliction, that thou couldst not see that fascinated and charmed gaze, that said so much—that made the eye the voice of the soul—that promised the impossibility of change!

But, though the Thessalian could not detect that gaze, she divined its meaning by their silence—by their sighs. She pressed her hands tightly across her breast, as if to keep down its bitter and jealous thoughts; and then she hastened to speak—for that silence was intolerable to her.

"After all, O Glaucus!" said she, "there is nothing very mirthful in your strain."

"Yet I meant it to be so, when I took up thy lyre, pretty one. Perhaps happiness will not permit us to be mirthful."

"How strange is it!" said Ione, changing a conversation that oppressed her while it charmed; "that for the last several days yonder cloud has hung motionless over Vesuvius, yet not indeed motionless, for sometimes it changes its form; and now methinks it looks like some vast giant, with an arm outstretched over the city. Dost thou see the likeness—or is it only to my fancy?"

"Fair Ione! I see it also. It is astonishingly distinct. The giant seems seated on the brow of the mountain; the different shades of the cloud body forth a white and sweeping robe over its vast breast and limbs; it seems to gaze with a steady face upon the city below, to point with one hand, as thou sayest, over its glittering streets, and to raise the other (dost thou note it?) towards the higher heaven. It is like the ghost of some huge Titan brooding over the beautiful world he lost; sorrowful for the past—yet with something of menace for the future."

"Could that mountain have any connexion with the last night's earthquake? They say that ages ago, almost in the earliest era of tradition, it gave forth fires as *Ætna* still does. Perhaps the flames yet lurk and dart beneath."

"It is possible!" said Glaucus, musingly.

"Thou sayst thou art slow to believe in magic;" said Nydia, suddenly. "I have heard that a potent witch dwells among the scorched caverns of the mountain, and yon cloud may be the dim shadow of the demon she confers with."

"Thou art full of the romance of thy native Thessaly," said Glaucus, "and a strange mixture of sense and all conflicting superstitions."

"We are ever superstitious in the dark," replied Nydia. "Tell me," she added, after a slight pause, "tell me, O Glaucus! do all that are beautiful resemble each other? they say you are beautiful, and Ione also. Are your faces then the same? I fancy not, yet it ought to be so!"

"Fancy no such grievous wrong to Ione," answered Glaucus, laughing. "But we do not, alas! resemble each other, as the homely and the beautiful sometimes do. Ione's hair is dark, mine light; Ione's eyes are—what colour, Ione, I cannot see, turn them to me? Oh, are they black? No they are too soft. Are they blue? no, they are too deep; they change with every ray of the sun—I know not their colour; but mine, sweet Nydia, are gray, and bright only when Ione shines on them! Ione's cheek is—"

"I do not understand one word of thy description," interrupted Nydia, peevishly. "I comprehend only that you do not resemble each other, and I am glad of it."

"Why Nydia?" said Ione.

Nydia coloured slightly. "Because," she replied, coldly, "I have always imagined you under different forms, and one likes to know one is right."

"And what hast thou imagined Glaucus to resemble?" asked Ione, softly.

"Music!" replied Nydia, looking down.

"Thou art right," thought Ione.

"And what likeness hast thou ascribed to Ione?"

"I cannot tell yet," answered the blind girl; "I have not yet known her long enough to find a shape and sign for my guesses."

"I will tell thee, then," said Glaucus, passionately; "she is like the sun that warms — like the wave that refreshes."

"The sun sometimes scorches, and the wave sometimes drowns," answered Nydia.

"Take then these roses," said Glaucus, "let their fragrance suggest to thee Ione."

"Alas, the roses will fade!" said the Neapolitan, archly.

Thus conversing, they wore away the hours, the lovers conscious only of the brightness and smiles of love; the blind girl feeling only its darkness — its tortures; the fierceness of jealousy and its woe!

And now, as they drifted on, Glaucus once more resumed the lyre, and woke its strings with a careless hand to a strain, so wildly and gladly beautiful, that even Nydia was aroused from her reverie, and uttered a cry of admiration.

"Thou seest, my child," cried Glaucus, "that I can yet redeem the character of love's music, and that I was wrong in saying happiness could not be gay. Listen, Nydia! listen, dear Ione! and hear

THE BIRTH OF LOVE.*

1.

Like a Star in the seas above,
 Like a Dream to the waves of sleep —
 Up — up — THE INCARNATE LOVE —
 She rose from the charmed deep!
 And over the Cyprian Isle
 The skies shed their silent smile;
 And the Forest's green heart was rife
 With the stir of the gushing life —
 The life that had leapt to birth,
 In the veins of the happy earth!
 Hail! oh, hail!
 The dimmest sea-cave below thee,
 The farthest sky-arch above,
 In their innermost stillness know thee,
 Hurrah! for the Birth of Love!
 Gale! soft Gale!
 Thou com'st on thy silver winglets,
 From thy home in the tender west; †
 Now fanning her golden ringlets,
 Now hushed on her heaving breast.

* Suggested by a picture of Venus rising from the sea, taken from Pompeii, and now in the Museum at Naples.

† According to the ancient mythologists, Venus rose from the sea near Cyprus, to which island she was wafted by the Zephyrs. The Seasons waited to welcome her on the seashore.

And afar on the murmuring sand,
The Seasons wait hand in hand
To welcome thee, Birth Divine,
To the Earth, which is henceforth thine.

2.

Behold! how she kneels in the shell,
Bright pearl in its floating cell!
Behold! how the shell's rose-hues
The cheek and the breast of snow,
And the delicate limbs suffuse
Like a blush, with a bashful glow.
Sailing on, slowly sailing
O'er the wild water;
All hail! as the fond Light is hailing
Her daughter,
All hail!
We are thine, all thine evermore,
Not a leaf on the laughing shore,
Not a wave on the heaving sea,
Nor a single sigh
In the boundless sky,
But is vowed evermore to thee!

3.

And thou, my beloved one — thou,
As I gaze on thy soft eyes now,
Methinks from their depths I view
The holy Birth born anew;
Thy lids are the gentle cell
Where the young Love blushing lies;
See! she breaks from the mystic shell,
She comes from thy tender eyes!
Hail! — all hail!
She comes, as she came from the sea
To my soul as it looks on thee;
She comes, she comes!
She comes, as she came from the sea
To my soul as it looks on thee!
Hail! — all hail!

CHAPTER III.

THE CONGREGATION.

FOLLOWED by Apæcides, the Nazarene gained the side of the Sarnus; — that river, which now has shrunk into a petty stream, then rushed gayly into the sea, covered with countless vessels, and reflecting on its waves the gardens, the vines, the palaces, and the temples of Pompeii. From its more noisy and frequented banks, Olinthus directed his steps to a path which ran amid a shady vista of trees, at the distance of a few paces from the river. This walk was in the evening a favourite resort of the Pompeians, but during the heat and business of the day was seldom visited, save by some groups of playful children, some meditative poet, or some disputative philosophers. At the side farthest from the river, frequent copses of box interspersed the more delicate and evanescent foliage, and these were cut into a thousand quaint shapes, sometimes into the forms of fauns and

satyrs, sometimes into the mimicry of Egyptian pyramids, sometimes into the letters that composed the name of a popular or eminent citizen. Thus the false taste is equally ancient as the pure; and the retired traders of Hackney and Paddington, a century ago, were little aware, perhaps, that in their tortured yews and sculptured box, they found their models in the most polished period of Roman antiquity, in the gardens of Pompeii and the villas of the fastidious *Plebeius*.

This walk now, as the noon-day sun shone perpendicularly through the checkered leaves, was entirely deserted; at least no other forms than those of Olinthus and the priest infringed upon the solitude. They sat themselves on one of the benches, placed at intervals between the trees, and facing the faint breeze that came languidly from the river, whose waves danced and sparkled before them; — a singular and contrasted pair! — the believer in the latest — the priest of the most ancient — worship of the world!

"Since thou leftst me so abruptly," said Olinthus, "hast thou been happy? has thy heart found contentment under these priestly robes? hast thou, still yearning for the voice of God, heard it whisper comfort to thee from the oracles of Isis? That sigh, that averted countenance, give me the answer my soul predicted."

"Alas!" answered Apæcides, sadly, "thou seest before thee a wretched and distracted man! From my childhood upward I have idolized the dreams of virtue; I have envied the holiness of men who, in caves and lonely temples, have been admitted to the companionship of beings above the world; my days have been consumed with feverish and vague desires; my nights with mocking but solemn visions. Seduced by the mystic prophecies of an impostor, I have endued these robes; — my nature — (I confess it to thee frankly) — my nature has revolted at what I have seen and been doomed to share in! Searching after truth, I have become but the minister of falsehoods. On the evening in which we last met, I was buoyed by hopes, created by that same impostor whom I ought already to have better known. I have — no matter — no matter! — suffice it, I have added perjury and sin to rashness and to sorrow. The veil is now rent for ever from my eyes — I behold a villain where I obeyed a demi-god; the earth darkens in my sight — I am in the deepest abyss of gloom; I know not if there be gods above — if we are the things of chance — if beyond the bounded and melancholy present, there is annihilation or a hereafter — tell me, then, thy faith; solve me these doubts, if thou hast indeed the power."

"I do not marvel," answered the Nazarene, "that thou hast thus erred, or that thou art thus skeptic. Eighty years ago, there was no assurance to man of God, or of a certain and definite future beyond the grave. New laws are declared to him who has ears — a heaven, a true Olympus is revealed to him who has eyes — heed then, and listen."

And with all the earnestness of a man believing ardently himself, and zealous to convert, the Nazarene poured forth to Apæcides the assurances of Scriptural promise. He spoke first of the sufferings and miracles of Christ — he wept as he spoke; he turned next to the glories of the Saviour's ascension — to the clear predictions of Revelation. He described that pure and unsensual heaven destined to the virtuous — those fires and torments that were the doom of guilt.

The doubts which spring up to the mind of later reasoners, in the immensity of the sacrifice of God to man, were not such as would occur to an early heathen. He had been accustomed to believe that the gods had lived upon earth, and taken upon themselves the forms of men; had shared in human passions, in human labours, and in human misfortunes. What was the travail of her own Alcmena's son, whose altars now smoked with the incense of countless cities, but a toil for the human race? Had not the

great Dorian Apollo expiated a mystic sin by descending to the grave? Those who were the deities of heaven had been the lawgivers or benefactors on earth, and gratitude had led to worship. It seemed, therefore, to the heathen, a doctrine neither new nor strange, that Christ had been sent from heaven, that an immortal had induced mortality, and tasted the bitterness of death: And the end for which he thus toiled, and thus suffered—how far more glorious did it seem to Apæcides than that for which the deities of old had visited the nether world, and passed through the gates of death! Was it not worthy of a God to descend to these dim valleys, in order to clear up the clouds gathered over the dark mount beyond—to satisfy the doubts of sages—to convert speculation into certainty—by example, to point out the rules of life—by revelation, to solve the enigma of the grave—and to prove that the soul did not yearn in vain, when it dreamed of an immortality? In this last was the great argument of those lowly men destined to convert the earth. As nothing is more flattering to the pride and the hopes of man, than the belief in a future state, so nothing could be more vague and confused than the notions of the heathen sages upon that mystic subject.

Apæcides had already learned that the faith of the philosophers was not that of the herd; that if they secretly professed a creed in some diviner power, it was not the creed which they thought it wise to impart to the community. He had already learned, that even the priest ridiculed what he preached to the people—that the notions of the few and the many were never united. But, in this new faith, it seemed to him that philosopher, priest, and people, the expounders of the religion and its followers, were alike accordant: they did not speculate and debate upon immortality, they spake of it as a thing certain and assured; the magnificence of the promise dazzled him—its consolations soothed. For the Christian faith made its early converts among sinners! many of its fathers and its martyrs were those who had felt the bitterness of vice, and who were therefore no longer tempted by its false aspect from the paths of an austere and uncompromising virtue. All the assurances of this healing faith invited to repentance—they were peculiarly adapted to the bruised and sore of spirit; the very remorse which Apæcides felt for his late excesses, made him incline to one who found holiness in that remorse, and who whispered of the joy in heaven over one sinner that repenteth.

"Come," said the Nazarene, as he perceived the effect he had produced, "come to the humble hall in which we meet—a select and chosen few; listen there to our prayers; note the sincerity of our repentant tears; mingle in our simple sacrifice—not of victims, nor of garlands, but offered by white-robed thoughts upon the altar of the heart; the flowers that we lay there are imperishable—they bloom over us when we are no more; nay, they accompany us beyond the grave, they spring up beneath our feet in heaven, they delight us with an eternal odour, for they are of the soul, they partake its nature; these offerings are temptations overcome, and sins repented. Come, oh come! lose not another moment; prepare already for the great, the awful journey, from darkness to light, from sorrow to bliss, from corruption to immortality! This is the day of the Lord the Son, a day that we have set apart for our devotions. Though we meet usually at night, yet some among us are gathered together even now. What joy, what triumph, will be with us all, if we can bring one stray lamb into the sacred fold."

There seemed to Apæcides, so naturally pure of heart, something ineffably generous and benign in that spirit of conversation which animated Olinthus—a spirit that found its own bliss in the happiness of others—that sought in its wide sociality to make companions for eternity. He was touched, softened, and subdued. He was not in that mood which can

bear to be left alone; curiosity, too, mingled with his purer stimulants — he was anxious to see those rites of which so many dark and contradictory rumours were afloat. He paused a moment, looked over his garb, thought of Arbaces, shuddered with horror, lifted his eyes to the broad brow of the Nazarene, intent, anxious, watchful — but for *his* benefit, for his salvation! He drew his cloak round him, so as wholly to conceal his robes, and said, "Lead on, I follow thee."

Olinthus pressed his hand joyfully, and then descending to the river-side, hailed one of the boats that plied there constantly; they entered it; an awning overhead, while it sheltered them from the sun, screened also their persons from observation: they rapidly skimmed the wave. From one of the boats that passed them, floated a soft music, and its prow was decorated with flowers — it was gliding towards the sea.

"So," said Olinthus, sadly, "unconscious and mirthful in their delusions, sail the votaries of luxury into the great ocean of storm and shipwreck; we pass them, silent and unnoticed, to gain the land."

Apæcides, lifting his eyes, caught through the aperture in the awning a glimpse of the face of one of the inmates of that gay bark — it was the face of Ione. The lovers were embarked on the excursion to which we have been made present. The priest sighed, and once more sunk back upon his seat. They reached the shore where, in the suburbs, an alley of small and mean houses stretched towards the bank; they dismissed the boat, landed, and Olinthus preceding the priest, threaded the labyrinth of lanes, and arrived at last at the closed door of a habitation somewhat larger than its neighbours. He knocked thrice — the door was opened and closed again, as Apæcides followed his guide across the threshold.

They passed a deserted atrium, and gained an inner chamber of moderate size, which, when the door was closed, received its only light from a small window cut over the door itself. But, halting at the threshold of this chamber, and knocking at the door, Olinthus said, "Peace be with you!" a voice from within returned, "Peace with whom?" "The faithful!" answered Olinthus, and the door opened; twelve or fourteen persons were sitting in a semicircle, silent, and seemingly absorbed in thought, and opposite to a crucifix rudely carved in wood.

They lifted up their eyes when Olinthus entered, without speaking; the Nazarene himself, before he accosted them, knelt suddenly down, and by his moving lips, and his eyes fixed steadfastly on the crucifix, Apæcides saw that he prayed inly. This rite performed, Olinthus turned to the congregation — "Men and brethren," said he, "start not to behold among you a priest of Isis; he hath sojourned with the blind, but the spirit hath fallen on him — he desires to see, to hear, and to understand."

"Let him," said one of the assembly; and Apæcides beheld in the speaker a man still younger than himself, of a countenance equally worn and pallid, of an eye which equally spoke of the restless and fiery operations of a working mind.

"Let him," repeated a second voice, and he who thus spoke was in the prime of manhood; his bronzed skin and Asiatic features bespoke him a son of Syria — he had been a robber in his youth.

"Let him," said a third voice, and the priest, again turning to regard the speaker, saw an old man with a long gray beard, whom he recognized as a slave to the wealthy Diomed.

"Let him," repeated simultaneously the rest — men who, with two exceptions, were evidently of the inferior rank. In these exceptions, Apæcides noted an officer of the guard, and an Alexandrian merchant.

"We do not," recommenced Olinthus — "we do not bind you to secrecy; we impose on you no oaths (as some of our weaker brethren would do,) not to betray us. It is true, indeed, that there is no absolute law against us;

but the multitude, more savage than their rulers, thirst for our lives. So, my friends, when Pilate would have hesitated, it was *the people* who shouted, 'Christ to the cross!' But we bind you not to our safety — no! Betray us to the crowd — impeach, calumniate, malign us if you will: — we are above death, we should walk cheerfully to the den of the lion, or the rack of the torturer — we can trample down the darkness of the grave, and what is death to a criminal is eternity to the Christian."

A low and applauding murmur ran through the assembly.

"Thou comest among us an examiner, mayst thou remain a convert. Our religion? you behold it! Yon cross our sole image, yon scroll the mysteries of our Cære and Eleusis! Our morality? it is in our lives! — sinners we all have been; who now can accuse us of a crime? we have baptized ourselves from the past. Think not that this is of us, it is of God. Approach, Medon," beckoning to the old slave who had spoken third for the admission of Apæcides, "thou art the sole man among us who is not free. But in heaven, the last shall be first; so with us. Unfold your scroll, read, and explain."

Useless would it be for us to accompany the lecture of Medon, or the comments of the congregation. Familiar now are those doctrines then strange and new. Eighteen centuries have left us little to expound upon the lore of Scripture or the life of Christ. To us, too, there would seem little congenial in the doubts that occurred to a heathen priest, and little learned in the answers they received from men, uneducated, rude, and simple, possessing only the knowledge that they were greater than they seemed.

There was one thing that greatly touched the Neapolitan; when the lecture was concluded, they heard a very gentle knock at the door: the password was given, and replied to; the door opened, and two young children, the eldest of whom might have told its seventh year, entered timidly; they were the children of the master of the house, that dark and hardy Syrian, whose youth had been spent in pillage and bloodshed. The eldest of the congregation (it was that old slave) opened to them his arms; they fled to the shelter — they crept to his breast — and his hard features smiled as he caressed them. And then these bold and fervent men, nursed in vicissitude, beaten by the rough winds of life — men of mailed and impervious fortune, ready to affront a world, prepared for torment and armed for death — men, who presented all imaginable contrast to the weak nerves, the light hearts, the tender fragility of childhood, — crowded around the infants, smoothing their rugged brows, and composing their bearded lips to kindly and fostering smiles: and then the old man opened the scroll, and he taught the infants to repeat after him that beautiful prayer which we still dedicate to the Lord, and still teach to our children; and then he told them, in simple phrase, of God's love to the young, and how not a sparrow falls but his eye sees it. This lovely custom of infant initiation was long cherished by the early church, in memory of the words which said, "Suffer the little ones to come unto me, and forbid them not;" and was perhaps the origin of the superstitious calumny which ascribed to the Nazarene the crime which the Nazarene when victorious attributed to the Jew, viz. the decoying children to hideous rites, to which they were secretly immolated.

And the stern paternal penitent seemed to feel in the innocence of his children a return into early life — life ere yet it sinned: he followed the motion of their young lips with an earnest gaze; he smiled as they repeated, with hushed and reverent looks, the holy words; and when the lesson was done, and they ran released and gladly to his knee, he clasped them to his breast, kissed them again and again, and tears flowed fast down his cheek — tears of which it would have been impossible to trace the source, so mingled they were with joy and sorrow, penitence and hope, remorse for himself and love for them!

Something, I say, there was in this scene which peculiarly affected Apæcides; and, in truth, it is difficult to conceive a ceremony more appropriate to the religion of benevolence, more appealing to the household and everyday affections, striking a more sensitive chord in the human breast.

It was at this time that an inner door opened gently, and a very old man entered the chamber, leaning on a staff. At his presence the whole congregation rose; there was an expression of deep affectionate respect upon every countenance; and Apæcides, gazing on his countenance, felt attracted towards him by an irresistible sympathy. No man ever looked upon that face without love; for there had dwelt the smile of the Deity, the Incarnation of divinest Love; — and the glory of the smile had never passed away!

"My children, God be with you!" said the old man, stretching his arms; and as he spoke, the infants ran to his knee. He sat down, and they nestled fondling to his bosom. It was beautiful to see! that mingling of the extremes of life — the rivers gushing from their early source — the majestic stream gliding to the ocean of eternity. As the light of declining day seems to mingle earth and heaven, making the outline of each scarce visible, and blending the harsh mountain-tops with the sky; even so did the smile of that benign old age appear to hallow the aspect of those around, to blend together the strong distinctions of varying years, and to diffuse over infancy and manhood the light of that heaven into which it must soon vanish and be lost.

"Father," said Olinthus, "thou on whose form the miracle of the Redeemer worked; thou who wert snatched from the grave to become the living witness of his mercy and his power; behold! a stranger in our meeting — a new lamb gathered to the fold!"

"Let me bless him," said the old man; the throng gave way. Apæcides approached him as by an instinct; he fell on his knees before him — the old man laid his hand on the priest's head, and blessed him, but not aloud. As his lips moved, his eyes were upturned, and tears — those tears that good men only shed in the hope of happiness to another — flowed fast down his cheeks.

The children were on either side of the convert; his heart was as theirs — he had become as one of them — to enter into the kingdom of heaven!

CHAPTER IV.

THE STREAM OF LOVE RUNS ON — WHITHER.

DAYS are like years in the love of the young, when no bar, no obstacle is between their hearts — when the sun shines, and the course runs smooth — when their love is prosperous and confessed. Ione no longer concealed from Glaucus the attachment she felt for him, and their talk was now only of their love. Over the rapture of the present, the hopes of the future glowed like the heaven above the gardens of spring. They went in their trustful thoughts far down the stream of time — they laid out the chart of their destiny to come — they suffered the light of to-day to suffuse the morrow. In the youth of their hearts, it seemed as if care, and change, and death were as things unknown. Perhaps they loved each other the more, because the condition of the world left to Glaucus no aim and no wish but love; because the distractions common in free states to men's affection, existed not for the Athenian — because his country wooed him not to the

bustle of civil life — because ambition furnished no counterpoise to love : and, therefore, over their schemes and their projects, love only reigned. In the iron age, they imagined themselves of the golden, doomed only to live and to love.

To the superficial observer who interests himself only in characters strongly marked and broadly coloured, both the lovers may seem of too slight and commonplace a mould : in the delineation of characters purposely subdued, the reader sometimes imagines that there is a want of character ; perhaps, indeed, I wrong the real nature of these two lovers, by not painting more impressively their stronger individualities. But in dwelling so much on their bright and bird-like existence, I am influenced almost insensibly by the forethought of the changes that await them, and for which they were so ill prepared. It was this very softness and gayety of life that contrasted most strongly the vicissitudes of the coming fate. For the oak, without fruit or blossom, whose hard and rugged heart is fitted for the storm, there is less fear than for the delicate branches of the myrtle, and the laughing clusters of the vine.

They had now entered far upon August—the next month their marriage was fixed, and the threshold of Glaucus was already wreathed with garlands ; and nightly, by the door of Ione, he poured forth the rich libations. He existed no longer for his gay companions ; he was ever with Ione. In the mornings they beguiled the sun with music ; in the evenings they forsook the crowded haunts of the gay for excursions on the water, or along the fertile and vine-clad plains that lay beneath the fatal mount of Vesuvius. The earth shook no more ; the lively Pompeians forgot even that there had gone forth so terrible a warning of their approaching doom. Glaucus imagined that convulsion, in the vanity of his heathen religion, an especial interposition of the gods, less in behalf of his own safety than that of Ione. He offered up the sacrifices of gratitude at the temple of his faith ; and even the altar of Isis was covered with his votive garlands : — as to the prodigy of the animated marble, he blushed at the effect it had produced on him. He believed it, indeed, to have been wrought by the magic of man ; but the result convinced him that it betokened *not the anger of a goddess*.

Of Arbaces, they heard only that he still lived ; stretched on the bed of suffering, he recovered slowly from the effect of the shock he had sustained — he left the lovers unmolested — but it was only to brood over the hour and the method of revenge.

Alike in their mornings at the house of Ione, and in their evening excursions, Nydia was usually their constant, and often their sole, companion. They did not guess the secret fires which consumed her — the abrupt freedom with which she mingled in their conversation — her capricious, and often her peevish moods, found ready indulgence in the recollection of the service they owed her, and their compassion for her affliction. They felt, perhaps, the greater and more affectionate interest for her, from the very strangeness and waywardness of her nature, her singular alternations of passion and softness — the mixture of ignorance and genius — of delicacy and rudeness — of the quick humours of the child, and the proud calmness of the woman. Although she refused to accept of freedom, she was constantly suffered to be free ; she went where she listed ; no curb was put either on her words or actions ; they felt for one so darkly fated, and so susceptible of every wound, the same pitying and compliant indulgence the mother feels for a spoiled and sickly child, — dreading to impose authority, even where they imagined it for her benefit. She availed herself of this license, by refusing the companionship of the slave whom they wished to attend her. With the slender staff by which she guided her steps, she went now, as in her former unprotected state, along the

populous streets; it was almost miraculous to perceive how quickly and how dexterously she threaded every crowd, avoided every danger, and could find her benighted way through the most intricate windings of the city. But her chief delight was still in visiting the few feet of ground which made the garden of Glaucus — in tending the flowers that at least repaid her love. Sometimes she entered the chamber where he sat, and sought a conversation, which she nearly always broke off abruptly — for conversation with Glaucus only tended to one subject — *Ione*; and that name from his lips inflicted agony upon her. Often she bitterly repented the service she had rendered to *Ione*; often she said inly, "If she had fallen, Glaucus could have loved her no longer!" and then dark and fearful thoughts crept into her breast.

She had not experienced fully the trials that were in store for her when she had been thus generous. She had never been present when Glaucus and *Ione* were together; she had never heard that voice so kind to her so much softer to another. The shock that crushed her heart with the tidings that Glaucus loved, had at first only saddened and benumbed; — by degrees, jealousy took a wilder and fiercer shape; it partook of hatred — it whispered revenge. As you see the wind only agitate the green leaf upon the bough, while the leaf which has lain withered and seared on the ground, bruised and trampled upon, till the sap and life are gone, is suddenly whirled aloft — now here — now there — without stay — and without rest; so the love which visits the happy and the hopeful, hath but freshness on its wings; its violence is but sportive: but the heart that hath fallen from the green things of life, that is without hope, that hath no summer in its fibres, is torn and whirled by the same wind that but caresses its brethren; — it hath no bough to cling to — it is dashed from path to path — till the winds fall, and it is crushed into the mire for ever.

The friendless childhood of Nydia had hardened prematurely her character; perhaps the heated scenes of profligacy through which she had passed, seemingly unscathed, had ripened her passions, though they had not sullied her purity. The orgies of Burbo might only have disgusted; the banquets of the Egyptian might only have terrified, at the moment; but, perhaps, those winds of pollution left seeds in the breast over which they passed so lightly. As darkness, too, favours the imagination, so perhaps her very blindness contributed to feed with wild and delirious visions the love of the unfortunate girl. The voice of Glaucus had been the first that had sounded musically to her ear; his kindness made a deep impression upon her mind; when he had left Pompeii in the former year, she had treasured up in her heart every word he had uttered; and when any one told her, that this friend and patron of the poor flower-girl was the most brilliant and the most graceful of the young revellers of Pompeii, she had felt a pleasing pride in nursing his recollection. Even the task which she imposed upon herself, of tending his flowers, served to keep him in her mind; she associated him with all that was most charming to her impressions; and when she had refused to express what image she fancied *Ione* to resemble, it was partly, perhaps, that whatever was bright and soft in nature, she had already combined with the thought of Glaucus. If any of my readers ever loved at an age which they would now smile to remember — an age in which fancy forestalled the reason; let them say whether that love, among all its strange and complicated delicacies, was not above all other and later passions susceptible of jealousy; I seek not here the cause; I know that it is commonly the fact.

When Glaucus returned to Pompeii, Nydia had told another year of life; that year, with its sorrows, its loneliness, its trials, had greatly developed her mind and heart; and when the Athenian drew her unconsciously to his breast, deeming her still in soul as in years a child — when he kissed her

smooth cheek, and wound his arm round her trembling frame, Nydia felt suddenly, and as by revelation, that those feelings she had long and innocently cherished, were of love. Doomed to be rescued from tyranny by Glaucus — doomed to take shelter under his roof — doomed to breathe, but for so brief a time, the same air, and doomed, in the first rush of a thousand happy, grateful, delicious sentiments of an overflowing heart to hear that he loved another; to be commissioned to that other, the messenger, the minister; to feel all at once that utter nothingness which she was — which she ever must be, but which, till then, her young mind had not taught her, — that utter nothingness to him who was all to her; what wonder, that in her wild and passionate soul, all the elements jarred discordant; that if love reigned over the whole, it was not the love which is born of the more sacred and soft emotions. Sometimes she dreaded only lest Glaucus should discover her secret; sometimes she felt indignant that it was not suspected; it was a sign of contempt — could he imagine that she presumed so far? Her feelings to Ione ebbed and flowed with every hour; now she loved her because *he* did; now she hated her for the same cause. There were moments when she could have murdered her unconscious mistress; moments when she could have laid down life for her. These fierce and tremulous alternations of passion were too severe to be borne long. Her health gave way, though she felt it not — here cheek paled — her step grew feebler — tears came to her eyes more often, and relieved her less.

One morning, when she repaired to her usual task in the garden of the Athenian, she found Glaucus under the columns of the peristyle, with a merchant of the town; he was selecting jewels for his destined bride. He had already fitted up her apartment; the jewels he bought that day were placed also within it — they were never fated to grace the fair form of Ione — they may be seen at this day among the disinterred treasures of Pompeii, in the chambers of the studio at Naples.*

"Come hither, Nydia, put down thy vase, and come hither. Thou must take this chain from me — stay — there, I have put it on. — There, Servilius, does it not become her?"

"Wonderfully!" answered the jeweller — for jewellers were well-bred and flattering men, even at that day, — "But when these ear-rings glitter in the ears of the noble Ione, *then*, by Bacchus! you will see whether my art adds any thing to beauty."

"Ione?" repeated Nydia, who had hitherto acknowledged by smiles and blushes the gift of Glaucus.

"Yes," replied the Athenian, carelessly toying with the gems, "I am choosing a present for Ione, but there are none worthy of her."

He was startled as he spoke by an abrupt gesture of Nydia; she tore the chain violently from her neck, and dashed it on the ground.

"How is this? What, Nydia, dost thou not like the bauble? art thou offended?"

"You treat me ever as a slave and as a child," replied the Thessalian, with a breast heaving with ill-suppressed sobs, and she turned hastily away to the opposite corner of the garden.

Glaucus did not attempt to follow or to sooth; he was offended: he continued to examine the jewels and to comment on their fashion — to object to this and to praise that, and finally to be talked by the merchant into buying all; the safest plan for a lover, and one that any one will do right to adopt, provided always that he can obtain an Ione!

When he had completed his purchase and dismissed the jeweller, he retired into his chamber, dressed, mounted his chariot, and went to Ione.

* Several bracelets, chains, and jewels were found in the house.

He thought no more of the blind girl or her offence; he had forgotten both the one and the other.

He spent the forenoon with his beautiful Neapolitan, repaired thence to the baths, supped (if, as we have said before, we can justly so translate the three o'clock *cæna* of the Romans) alone, and abroad, for Pompeii had its restaurateurs:—and returning home to change his dress ere he again repaired to the house of Ione, he passed the peristyle, but with the absorbed revery and absent eyes of a man in love, and did not note the form of the poor blind girl, bending exactly in the same place where he had left her. But though he saw her not, her ear recognised at once the sound of his step. She had been counting the moments to his return. He had scarcely entered his favourite chamber which opened on the peristyle, and seated himself musingly on his couch, when he felt his robe timorously touched, and turning, he beheld Nydia kneeling before him, and holding up to him a handful of flowers—a gentle and an appropriate peace-offering;—her eyes, darkly upheld to his own, streamed with tears.

“I have offended thee,” said she, sobbing, “and for the first time. I would die rather than cause thee a moment’s pain—say that thou wilt forgive me. See! I have taken up the chain, I have put it on; I will never part from it, it is thy gift.”

“My dear Nydia,” returned Glaucus, and raising her he kissed her forehead, “think of it no more! But why, my child, wert thou so suddenly angry? I could not divine the cause!”

“Do not ask!” said she, colouring violently; “I am a thing full of faults and humours; you know I am but a child, you say so often; is it from a child that you can expect a reason for every folly?”

“But, prettiest, you will soon be a child no more; and if you would have us treat you as a woman, you must learn to govern these singular impulses and gales of passion. Think not I chide, no, it is for your happiness only I speak.”

“It is true,” said Nydia, “I must learn to govern myself; I must hide, I must suppress my heart. This is a woman’s task and duty; methinks her virtue is hypocrisy.”

“Self-control is not deceit, my Nydia,” returned the Athenian, “and that is the virtue necessary alike to man and to woman; it is the true senatorial toga, the badge of the dignity it covers.”

“Self-control, self-control! Well, well, what you say is right! When I listen to you, Glaucus, my wildest thoughts grow calm and sweet, and a delicious serenity falls over me. Advise, ah! guide me ever, my preserver!”

“Thy affectionate heart will be thy best guide, Nydia, when thou hast learned to regulate its feelings.”

“Ah! that will be never,” sighed Nydia, wiping away her tears.

“Say not so, the first effort is the only difficult one.”

“I have made many first efforts,” answered Nydia, innocently. “But you, my mentor, do you find it so easy to control yourself? Can you conceal—can you even regulate—your love for Ione?”

“Love, dear Nydia, ah! that is quite another matter,” answered the young preceptor.

“I thought so!” returned Nydia, with a melancholy smile. “Glaucus, wilt thou take my poor flowers! Do with them as thou wilt—thou canst give them to Ione if thou wilt,” added she, with a little hesitation.

“Nay, Nydia,” answered Glaucus, kindly, divining something of jealousy in her language, though he imagined it only the jealousy of a vain and susceptible child, “I will not give thy pretty flowers to any one. Sit here and weave them into a garland; I will wear it this night; it is not the first those delicate fingers have woven for me.”

The poor girl delightedly sat down beside Glaucus. She drew from her girdle a ball of the many coloured threads, or rather slender ribands used in the weaving of garlands, and which (for it was her professional occupation) she carried constantly with her, and began quickly and gracefully to commence her task. Upon her young cheeks the tears were already dried, a faint but happy smile played round her lips;—childlike indeed, she was sensible only of the joy of the present hour: she was reconciled to Glaucus: he had forgiven her—she was beside him—he played caressingly with her silken hair—his breath fanned her cheek,—lone, the cruel lone, was not by—none other demanded, divided, his care. Yes, she was happy and forgetful; it was one of the few moments in her brief and troubled life that it was sweet to treasure, to recall. As the butterfly, allured by the winter sun, basks for a little while in the sudden light, ere yet the wind awakes and the frost comes on, which shall blast it before the eve,—she rested beneath a beam which, by contrast with the wonted skies, was not chilling;—and the instinct which should have warned her of its briefness, bade her only gladden in its smile.

"Thou hast beautiful locks," said Glaucus. "They were once, I ween well, a mother's delight."

Nydia sighed; it would seem that she had not been born a slave; but she ever shunned the mention of her parentage, and whether obscure or noble, certain it is that her birth was never known by her benefactors, or by any one in those distant shores, even to the last. The child of sorrow and of mystery, she came and went as some bird that enters our chamber for a moment; we see it flutter, a while before us, we know not whence it flew or to what region it escapes.

Nydia sighed, and after a short pause, without answering the remark, said:

"But do I weave too many roses in thy wreath, Glaucus? they tell me it is thy favourite flower."

"And ever favoured, my Nydia, be it by those who have the soul of poetry—it is the flower of love, of festivals; it is also the flower we dedicate to Silence and to Death; it blooms on our brows in life, while life be worth the having; it is scattered above our sepulchre when we are no more."

"Ah! would," said Nydia, "instead of this perishable wreath, that I could take thy web from the hand of the Fates, and insert the roses *there*!"

"Pretty one! thy wish is worthy of a voice so attuned to song, it is uttered in the spirit of song, and whatever my doom, I thank thee."

"Whatever thy doom! is it not already destined to all things bright and fair? My wish was vain. The Fates will be as tender to thee as I should."

"It might not be so, Nydia, were it not for love! While youth lasts, I may forget my country for a while. But what Athenian, in his graver manhood, can think of Athens as she was, and be contented that *he* is happy, while *she* is fallen—fallen and for ever."

"And why for ever?"

"As ashes cannot be rekindled—as love once dead never can revive, so freedom departed from a people is never regained. But talk we not of these matters unsuited to thee?"

"To me, oh! thou errest. I, too, have my sighs for Greece; my cradle was rocked at the feet of Olympus; the gods have left the mountain, but their traces may be seen—seen in the hearts of their worshippers, seen in the beauty of their clime; they tell me it is beautiful, and I have felt its airs, to which even these are harsh—its sun, to which these skies are chill. Oh! talk to me of Greece! Poor fool that I am, I can comprehend thee! and methinks, had I yet lingered on those shores, had I been a Grecian maid, whose happy fate it was to love and to be loved, I myself could have armed

my lover for another Marathon, a new Plataea. Yes, the hand that now weaves the roses should have woven thee the olive crown!"

"If such a day could come!" said Glaucus, catching the enthusiasm of the blind Thessalian, and half rising — "But no! the sun has set, and the night only bids us be forgetful, — and in forgetfulness be gay; — weave still the roses!"

But it was with a melancholy tone of forced gayety that the Athenian uttered the last words, and sinking into a gloomy reverie, he was only wakened from it, a few minutes afterward, by the voice of Nydia, as she sang in a low tone the following words, which he had once taught her.

THE APOLOGY FOR PLEASURE.

I.

Who will assume the bays
That the hero wore?
Wreaths on the Tombs of Days
Gone evermore!
Who shall disturb the Brave,
Or one leaf on their holy grave?
The laurel is vowed to them,
Leave the bay on its sacred stem
But this, the rose, the fading rose,
Alike for slave and freeman grows!

II.

If Memory sits beside the dead
With tombs her only treasure;
If Hope is lost and Freedom fled,
The more excuse for pleasure.
Come weave the wreath, the roses weave,
The rose at least is ours;
To feeble hearts our fathers leave,
In pitying scorn, the flowers!

III.

On the summit worn and hoary,
Of Phyle's solemn hill,
The tramp of the brave is still!
And still, in the saddening Mart,
The pulse of that mighty Heart
Whose very blood was glory!
Glaucopis forsakes her own,
The angry gods forget us,
But yet the blue streams along,
Walk the feet of the silver Song.
And the night-bird wakes the moon;
And the bees in the blushing noon
Haunt the heart of the old Hymettus!
We are fallen but not forlorn,
If something is left to cherish,
As Love was the earliest born,
So Love is the last to perish.

IV.

Wreath then the roses, wreath!
THE BEAUTIFUL still is ours,
While the stream shall flow, and the sky shall glow,
THE BEAUTIFUL still is ours!

Whatever is fair, or soft, or bright,
 In the lap of day or the arms of night,
 Whispers our soul of Greece — of Greece,
 And hushes our care with a voice of peace.
 Wreath then the roses, wreath!
 They tell me of earlier hours,
 And I hear the heart of my Country breathe
 From the lips of the Stranger's flowers.

CHAPTER IV.

NYDIA ENCOUNTERS JULIA — INTERVIEW OF THE HEATHEN SISTER AND
 CONVERTED BROTHER — AN ATHENIAN'S NOTION OF CHRISTIANITY.

"WHAT happiness to Ione! what bliss to be ever by the side of Glaucus, to hear his voice — and *she* too can see him!"

Such was the soliloquy of the blind girl, as she walked alone and at twilight to the house of her new mistress, whither Glaucus had already preceded her. Suddenly she was interrupted in her fond thoughts by a female voice —

"Blind flower-girl, whither goest thou? there is no panner under thine arm; hast thou sold all thy flowers?"

The person thus accosting Nydia was a lady of a handsome, but a bold and unmaiden countenance; it was Julia, the daughter of Diomed. Her veil was half raised as she spoke; she was accompanied by Diomed himself, and by a slave carrying a lantern before them, — the merchant and his daughter were returning home from a supper at one of their neighbours'.

"Dost thou not remember my voice!" continued Julia; "I am the daughter of Diomed the wealthy."

"Ah! forgive me; yes, I recall the tones of your voice. No, noble Julia, I have no flowers to sell!"

"I heard that thou wert purchased by the beautiful Greek, Glaucus; is that true, pretty slave?" asked Julia.

"I serve the Neapolitan, Ione," replied Nydia, evasively.

"Ha! and it is true then —"

"Come! come!" interrupted Diomed, with his cloak up to his mouth, "the night grows cold, I cannot stay here while you prate with that blind girl; come, let her follow you home if you wish to speak to her."

"Do, child," said Julia, with the air of one not accustomed to be refused, "I have much to ask of thee; come."

"I cannot this night, it grows late," answered Nydia; "I must be at home; I am not free, noble Julia."

"What, the meek Ione will chide thee? ay, I doubt not she is a second Thalestris. But come then to-morrow: do — remember, I have been thy friend of old."

"I will obey thy wishes," answered Nydia — and Diomed again impatiently summoning his daughter, she was obliged to proceed, with the main question she had desired to put to Nydia unasked.

Meanwhile, we return to Ione. The interval of time that had elapsed that day between the first and second visit of Glaucus, had not been too gayly spent; she had received a visit from her brother. Since the night he had assisted in saving her from the Egyptian, she had not before seen him.

Occupied with his own thoughts — thoughts of so serious and intense a nature, the young priest had thought little of his sister: in truth, men perhaps of that fervent order of mind which is ever aspiring above earth, are

but little prone to the earthlier affections; and it had been long since Apæcides had sought those soft and friendly interchanges of thought, those sweet confidences, which in his earlier youth had bound him to Ione, and which are so natural to that endearing connexion which existed between them.

Ione, however, had not ceased to regret his estrangement; she attributed it, at present, to the engrossing duties of his severe fraternity. And often, amid all her bright hopes, and her new attachment to her betrothed — often when she thought of her brother's brow prematurely furrowed, his unsmiling lip, and bended frame, she sighed to think that the service of the gods could throw so deep a shadow over that earth which the gods created.

But this day, when he visited her, there was a strange calmness on his features, a more quiet and self-possessed expression in his sunken eyes than she had marked for years. This apparent improvement was but momentary — it was a false calm, which the least breeze could ruffle.

"May the gods bless thee, my brother!" said she, embracing him.

"The gods! Speak not thus vaguely; perchance there is but *one* God!"

"My brother!"

"What if the sublime faith of the Nazarene be true? What if God be a monarch — One — Indivisible — Alone? What if these numerous, — countless deities, whose altars fill the earth, be but evil demons, seeking to wean us from the true creed? This may be the case, Ione!"

"Alas! can we believe it? or if we believed, would it not be a melancholy faith?" answered the Neapolitan. "What! all this beautiful world made only human! — the mountain disenchanted of its Oread — the waters of their Nymph — that beautiful prodigality of faith, which makes every thing divine, consecrating the meanest flowers, bearing celestial whispers in the faintest breeze — wouldst thou deny this, and make the earth mere dust and clay? No, Apæcides; all that is brightest in our hearts is that very credulity which peoples the universe with gods."

Ione answered as a believer in the poesy of the old mythology would answer. We may judge by that reply how obstinate and hard the contest which Christianity had to endure among the heathens. The graceful superstition was never silent, every, the most household action of their lives was intertwined with it — it was a portion of life itself, as the flowers are a part of the thyrus. At every incident they recurred to a god, every cup of wine was prefaced by a libation; the very garlands on their thresholds were dedicated to some divinity; their ancestors themselves, made holy, presided as Lares over their hearth and hall. So abundant was belief with them, that in their own climes, at this hour, idolatry has never thoroughly been out-rooted; it changes but its objects of worship; it appeals to innumerable saints where once it resorted to divinities; and it pours its crowds, in listening reverence, to oracles at the shrines of St. Januarius or St. Dominic, instead of to those of Isis or Apollo.

But these superstitions were not to an early Christian the object of contempt so much as of horror. They did not believe, with the quiet skepticism of the heathen philosopher, that the gods were inventions of the priests, nor even with the vulgar, that according to the dim light of history they had been mortals like themselves. They imagined the heathen divinities to be evil spirits — they transplanted to Italy and to Greece the ghouly demons of India and the East; and in Jupiter or in Mars they shouldered at the representative of Moloch or of Satan.*

* In Pompeii, a rough sketch of Pluto delineates that fearful deity in the shape we at present ascribe to the devil, and decorates him with the paraphernalia of horns and a tail. But in all probability it was from the mysterious Pan — the haunter of solitary places — the inspirer of vague and soul-shaking terrors — that we took the vulgar notion of the outward likeness of the fiend; it corresponds exactly to the cloven-footed Satan. And, as the lewd and profligate rites of Pan, Christians might well imagine they traced the deceptions of the devil.

Apæcides had not yet adopted formally the Christian faith, but he was already on the brink of it. He already participated the doctrines of Olympus — he already imagined that the lively imaginations of the heathen were the suggestions of the arch enemy of mankind. The innocent and natural answer of Ione made him shudder. He hastened to reply vehemently, and yet so confusedly, that Ione feared for his reason more than she dreaded his violence.

"Ah, my brother!" said she, "these hard duties of thine have shattered thy very sense. Come to me, Apæcides, my brother, my own brother; give me thy hand, let me wipe the dew from thy brow; chide me not now, I understand thee not, think only that Ione could not offend thee."

"Ione," said Apæcides, drawing her towards him and regarding her tenderly, "can I think that this beautiful form, this kind heart, may be destined to an eternity of torment?"

"Dii meliora! the gods forbid!" said Ione, in the customary form of words by which her contemporaries thought an omen might be averted.

The words, and still more the superstition they implied, wounded the ear of Apæcides. He rose muttering to himself, turned from the chamber, then stopping halfway, gazed wistfully on Ione, and extended his arms.

Ione flew to them in joy; he kissed her earnestly, and then he said:

"Farewell, my sister; when we next meet, thou mayest be to me as nothing; take thou, then, this embrace; full yet of all the tender reminiscences of childhood, when faith and hope, creeds, customs, interests, objects, were the same to us. Now, the tie is to be broken!"

With these strange words he left the house.

The great and severest trial of the primitive Christians was indeed this; their conversion separated them from their dearest bonds. They could not associate with beings whose commonest actions, whose commonest forms of speech, were impregnated with idolatry. They shuddered at the blessing of love; to their ears it was uttered in a demon's name. This, their misfortune, was their strength; if it divided them from the rest of the world, it was to unite them proportionally to each other. They were men of iron, who wrought forth the Word of God, and verily the bonds that bound them were of iron also!

Glaucus found Ione in tears; he had already assumed the sweet privilege to console. He drew from her a recital of her interview with her brother, but in her confused account of language, itself so confused to one not prepared for it, he was equally at a loss with Ione to conceive the intentions or the meaning of Apæcides.

"Hast thou ever heard much," asked she, "of this new sect of the Nazarenes, of which my brother spoke?"

"I have often heard enough of the votaries," returned Glaucus, "but of their exact tenets know I naught, save that in their doctrine there seemeth something preternaturally chilling and morose. They live apart from their kind; they affect to be shocked even at our simple uses of garlands; they have no sympathies with the cheerful amusements of life; they utter awful threats of the coming destruction of the world: they appear, in one word, to have brought their unsmiling and gloomy creed out of the cave of Trophœus. Yet," continued Glaucus, after a slight pause, "they have not wanted men of great power and genius, nor converts even among the areopagites of Athens. Well do I remember to have heard my father speak of one strange guest at Athens many years ago; methinks his name was PAUL. My father was one among a mighty crowd that gathered on one of our immemorial hills to hear this sage of the East expound; through the wide throng there rang not a single murmur! — the jest and the roar with which our native orators are received, were hushed for him; — and when on

the loftiest summit of that hill, raised above the breathless crowd below, stood this mysterious visiter, his mien and his countenance awed every heart even before a sound left his lips. He was a man, I have heard my father say, of no tall stature, but of noble and impressive mien; his robes were dark and ample; the declining sun, for it was evening, shone aslant upon his form, as it rose aloft, motionless and commanding; his countenance was much worn and marked, as of one who had braved alike misfortune and the sternest vicissitude of many climes; but his eyes were bright with an almost unearthly fire; and when he raised his arm to speak, it was with the majesty of a man into whom the Spirit of a God hath rushed!

"Men of Athens!" he is reported to have said, 'I find among ye an altar with this inscription — TO THE UNKNOWN GOD. Ye worship in ignorance the same deity I serve. To you *unknown* till now, to you be it now revealed.'

"Then declared that solemn man how this great Maker of all things, who had appointed unto man his several tribes and his various homes — the Lord of earth and the universal heaven, dwelt not in temples made with hands; that his presence, his spirit, was in the air we breathed; — our life and our being was with Him. 'Think you,' he cried, 'that the Invisible is like your statues of gold and marble? Think you that he needeth sacrifice from you: He who made heaven and earth?' Then spake he of fearful and coming times, of the end of the world, of a second rising of the dead, whereof an assurance had been given to man in the resurrection of the mighty Being whose religion he came to preach.

"When he thus spoke, the long pent murmur went forth, and the philosophers that were mingled with the people muttered their sage contempt; there might you have seen the chilling frown of the Stoic, and the Cynic's sneer; — and the Epicurean, who believeth not even in our own Elysium, muttered a pleasant jest, and swept laughing through the crowd; but the deep heart of the people was touched and thrilled; and they trembled, though they knew not why, for verily the stranger had the voice and majesty of a man to whom 'The Unknown God' had committed the preaching of His faith."

Ione listened with rapt attention, and the serious and earnest manner of the narrator betrayed the impression that he himself had received from one who had been among the audience, that on the hill of the Heathen Mars had heard the first tidings of the word of Christ!

CHAPTER VIII.

THE PORTER — THE GIRL — AND THE GLADIATOR.

THE door of Diomed's house stood open, and Medon, the old slave, sat at the bottom of the steps by which you ascended to the mansion. The luxurious mansion of the rich merchant of Pompeii is still to be seen just without the gates of the city, at the commencement of the Street of Tombs; it was a gay neighbourhood, despite the dead. On the opposite side, but at some yards nearer the gate, was a spacious hostelry, at which those brought by business or by pleasure to Pompeii often stopped to refresh themselves. In the space before the entrance of the inn now stood wagons, and carts, and chariots, some just arrived, some just quitting, in all the bustle of an animated and popular resort of public entertainment. Before the door some farmers, seated on a bench by a small circular table, were talking over their morning cups on the affairs of their calling. On the side of the

door itself was painted gayly and freshly the eternal sign of the checkers.* By the roof of the inn stretched a terrace, on which some females, wives of the farmers above mentioned, were, some seated, some leaning over the railing, and conversing with their friends below. In a deep recess, at a little distance, was a covered seat, in which some two or three poorer travellers were resting themselves, and shaking the dust from their garments. On the other side stretched a wide space, originally the burial ground of a more ancient race than the present denizens of Pompeii, and now converted into the Ustrinum, or place for the burning of the dead. Above this rose the terraces of a gay villa, half hid by trees. The tombs themselves, with their graceful and varied shapes, the flowers and the foliage that surrounded them, made no melancholy feature in the prospect. Hard by the gate of the city, in a small niche, stood the still form of the well-disciplined Roman sentry, the sun shining brightly on his polished crest and the lance on which he leaned. The gate itself was divided into three arches, the central one for vehicles, those at the side for the foot-passengers, and on either side rose the massive walls which girt the city, composed, patched, repaired at a thousand different epochs, according as war, time, or the earthquake had shattered that vain protection. At frequent intervals rose square towers, whose summits broke in picturesque rudeness the regular line of the wall, and contrasted well with the modern buildings gleaming whitely by.

The curving road, which in that direction leads from Pompeii to Herculaneum, wound out of sight amid hanging vines, above which frowned the sullen majesty of Vesuvius.

"Hast thou heard the news, old Medon?" said a young woman with a pitcher in her hand, as she paused by Diomed's door to gossip a moment with the slave, ere she repaired to the neighbouring inn to fill the vessel, and coquet with the travellers.

"The news, what news?" said the slave, raising his eyes moodily from the ground.

"Why, there passed through the gate this morning, no doubt ere thou wert well awake, such a visiter to Pompeii!"

"Per hercle!" said the slave, indifferently.

"Yes, a present from the noble Pomponianus."

"A present! I thought thou saidst a visiter?"

"It is both visiter and present. Know, O dull and stupid! that it is a most beautiful young tiger for our approaching games in the Amphitheatre. Hear you that, Medon. Oh, what pleasure! I declare I shall not sleep a wink till I see it; they say it has such a roar!"

"Poor fool!" said Medon, sadly and cynically.

"Fool me no fool, old churl! It is a pretty thing, a tiger, especially if we could but find somebody for him to eat. We have now a lion and a tiger, only consider that, Medon! and for want of two good criminals, perhaps we shall be forced to see them eat each other. By-the-by, your son is a gladiator, a handsome man and a strong; can you not persuade him to fight the tiger? Do now, you would oblige me mightily; nay, you would be a benefactor to the whole town."

"Vah, vah!" said the slave, with great asperity; "think of thine own danger, ere thou thus pratest of my poor boy's death."

"My own danger!" said the girl, frightened and looking hastily around—"Avert the omen! let thy words fall on thine own head!" And the girl as she spoke touched a talisman suspended round her neck. "'Thine own danger!' what danger threatens me?"

"Had the earthquake but a few nights since no warning?" said Medon. "Hast it not a voice? Did it not say to us all, 'Prepare for death, the end of all things is at hand?'"

* There is another inn within the walls similarly adorned.

"Bah, stuff!" said the young woman, settling the folds of her tunic. "Now thou talkest as they say the Nazarenes talk — methinks thou art one of them. Well, I can prate with thee, gray croaker, no more, thou growest worse and worse — *Vale!* O Hercules, send us a man for the lion — and another for the tiger!"

"Ho! ho! for the merry, merry show,
With a forest of faces in every row!
Lo the swordsmen, bold as the son of Alcmena,
Sweep, side by side, o'er the hushed arena;
Talk while you may — you will hold your breath
When they meet in the grasp of the glowing death.
Tramp, tramp, how gayly they go!
Ho! ho! for the merry, merry show!"

Chanting in a silver and clear voice this feminine ditty, and holding up her tunic from the dusty road, the young woman stepped lightly across to the crowded hostelry.

"My poor son!" said the slave half aloud, "is it for things like this thou art to be butchered? Oh! faith of Christ, I could worship thee in all sincerity, were it but for the horror which thou inspirest for these bloody lists."

The old man's head sunk dejectedly on his breast. He remained silent and absorbed, but every now and then with the corner of his sleeve he wiped his eyes. His heart was with his son; he did not see the figure that now approached from the gate with a quick step, and a somewhat fierce and reckless gait and carriage. He did not lift his eyes till the figure paused opposite the place where he sat, and with a soft voice addressed him by the name of

"Father!"

"My boy, my Lydon, is it indeed thou?" said the old man, joyfully "Ah! thou wert present to my thoughts."

"I am glad to hear it, my father," said the gladiator, respectfully touching the knees and beard of the slave; "and soon may I be always present with thee, not in thought only."

"Yes, my son, — but not in this world," replied the slave mournfully.

"Talk not thus, O my sire! look cheerfully, for I feel so — I am sure that I shall win the day, and then the gold I gain buys thy freedom. Oh! my father, it was but a few days since that I was taunted, by one, too, whom I would gladly have undeceived, for he is more generous than the rest of his equals. He is not Roman — he is of Athens — by him I was taunted with the lust of gain — when I demanded what sum was the prize of victory. Alas! he little knew the soul of Lydon."

"My boy! my boy!" said the old slave, as slowly ascending the steps he conducted his son to his own little chamber, communicating with the entrance-hall (which, in this villa, was the peristyle, not the atrium); — you may see it now; it is the third door to the left on entering. (The first door conducts to the staircase; the second is but a false recess, in which there stood a statue of bronze.) — "Generous, affectionate, pious as are thy motives," said Medon, when they were thus secured from observation, "thy deed itself is guilt — thou art to risk thy blood for thy father's freedom — that might be forgiven: but the prize of victory is the blood of another. Oh, *that* is a deadly sin; no object can purify it. Forbear! forbear! rather would I be a slave for ever, than purchase liberty on such terms!"

"Hush! my father!" replied Lydon, somewhat impatiently; "thou hast picked up in this new creed of thine, of which I pray thee not to speak to me, for the gods that gave me strength denied me wisdom, and I understand not one word of what thou often preacheest to me, — thou hast picked up, I say, in this new creed, some singular phantasies of right and wrong. Pardon

me if I offend thee: but, reflect! Against whom shall I contend? Oh! couldst thou know those wretches with whom, for thy sake, I assert, thou wouldst think I purified earth by removing one of them. Beasts, whose very lips drop blood; things all savage, unprincipled in their very courage, ferocious, heartless, senseless; no tie of life can bind them: they know not fear, it is true — but neither know they gratitude, or charity, or love; they are made but for their own career, to slaughter without pity, to die without dread! Can thy gods, whosoever they be, look with wrath on a conflict with such as these, and in such a cause? Oh, my father, wherever the Powers above gaze down on earth, they behold no duty so sacred, so sanctifying, as the sacrifice offered to an aged parent by the piety of a grateful son!"

The poor old slave, himself deprived of the lights of knowledge, and only late a convert to the Christian faith, knew not with what arguments to enlighten an ignorance at once so dark, and yet so beautiful in its error. His first impulse was to throw himself on his son's breast — his next to start away — to wring his hands, and in the attempt to reprove, his broken voice lost itself in weeping.

"And if," resumed Lydon, "if thy Deity (methinks thou wilt own but one?) be indeed that benevolent and pitying power which thou assertedst him to be, he will know also that thy very faith in him first confirmed me in that determination thou blamest."

"How! what mean you?" said the slave.

"Why, thou knowest that I, sold in my childhood as a slave, was set free at Rome by the will of my master, whom I had been fortunate enough to please. I hastened to Pompeii to see thee — I found thee already aged and infirm, under the yoke of a capricious and pampered lord — thou hast lately adopted this new faith, and its adoption made thy slavery doubly painful to thee; it took away all the softening charm of custom, which reconciles us so often to the worst. Didst thou not complain to me that thou wert compelled to offices that were not odious to thee as a slave, but guilty as a Nazarene? Didst thou not tell me that thy soul shook with remorse, when thou wert compelled to place even a crumb of cake before the Lares that watch over yon impluvium? that thy soul was torn by a perpetual struggle? Didst thou not tell me, that even by pouring wine before the threshold, and calling on the name of some Grecian deity, thou didst fear thou wert incurring penalties worse than those of Tantalus — an eternity of torture more terrible than those of the Tartarian fields? Didst thou not tell me this? I wondered — I could not comprehend! nor, by Hercules — can I now; but I was thy son, and my sole task was to compassionate and relieve. Could I hear thy groans, could I witness thy mysterious horrors, thy constant anguish, and remain inactive? No! by the immortal gods! the thought struck me like light from Olympus; I had no money, but I had strength and youth — these were thy gifts — I could sell these in my turn for thee! I learned the amount of thy ransom — I learned that the usual prize of a victorious gladiator would doubly pay it. I became a gladiator — I linked myself with those accursed men, scorning, loathing, while I joined — I acquired their skill — blessed be the lesson! — it shall teach me to free my father!"

"Oh, that thou couldst hear Olinthus!" sighed the old man, more and more affected by the virtue of his son, but not less strongly convinced of the criminality of his purpose.

"I will hear the whole world talk, if thou wilt," answered the gladiator, gayly; "but not till thou art slave no more. Beneath thy own roof, my father, thou shalt puzzle this dull brain all day long, ay, and all night too, if it give thee pleasure. Oh, such a spot as I have chalked out for thee! — it is one of the nine hundred and ninety-nine shops of old Julia Felix, in the sunny part of the city, where thou mayst bask before the door in the

day—and I will sell the oil and the wine for thee, my father—and then, please Venus (or if it does not please her, since thou lovest not her name, it is all one to Lydon;)—then, I say, perhaps thou mayest have a daughter too, to tend thy gray hairs, and hear shrill voices at thy knee that shall call thee ‘Lydon’s father!’ Ah! we shall be so happy—the prize can purchase all. Cheer thee! cheer up, my sire! and now I must away—day wears—the Lanista waits me. Come! thy blessing.”

As Lydon thus spoke, he had already quitted the dark chamber of his father, and speaking eagerly, though in a whispered tone, they now stood at the same place in which we introduced the porter at his post.

“O bless thee! bless thee! my brave boy,” said Medon, fervently, “and may the great Power that reads all hearts see the nobleness of thine, and forgive its error!”

The tall shape of the gladiator passed swiftly down the path; the eyes of the slave followed its light, but stately steps, till the last glimpse was gone; and then sinking once more on his seat, his eyes again fastened themselves on the ground. His form, mute and unmoving, as a thing of stone. His heart!—who, in our happier age, can even imagine its struggles—its commotion!

“May I enter,” said a sweet voice; “is thy mistress Julia within?”

The slave mechanically motioned to the visiter to enter; but she who addressed him could not see the gesture—she repeated her question timidly, but in a louder voice.

“Have I not told thee,” said the slave, peevishly, “enter.”

“Thanks,” said the speaker, plaintively; and the slave, roused by the tone, looked up, and recognised the blind flower-girl. Sorrow can sympathize with affliction—he raised himself, and guided her steps to the head of the adjacent staircase (by which you descended to Julia’s apartment) where summoning a female slave, he consigned to her the charge of the blind girl.

CHAPTER VI.

THE DRESSING-ROOM OF A POMPEIAN BEAUTY—IMPORTANT CONVERSATION BETWEEN JULIA AND NYDIA.

THE elegant Julia sat in her chamber with her slaves around her:—like the cubiculum which adjoined it, the room was small—but much larger than the usual apartments appropriated to sleep, which were generally so diminutive, that few who have not seen the bed-chambers, even in the gayest mansions, can form any notion of the petty pigeon-holes in which the citizens of Pompeii evidently thought it desirable to pass the night. But, in fact, “bed”, with the ancients was not that grave, serious, and important part of domestic mysteries which it is with us. The couch itself was more like a very narrow and small sofa, light enough to be transported easily, and by the occupant himself,* from place to place; and it was, no doubt, constantly shifted from chamber to chamber, according to the caprices of the inmate or the changes of the season. For that side of the house which was crowded in one month, might, perhaps, be carefully avoided in the next; so susceptible were the inhabitants of the most beautiful climate in the world of those alternations of sun and breeze which, to our hardier frame, inured to the harsh skies of the north, would be scarcely perceptible. There was also among the Italians of that period a singular and fastidious apprehension of too much daylight; their darkened chambers, which at first appear to us

* “Take up thy bed and walk” was (as Sir W. Gell somewhere observes) no metaphorical expression.

the result of a negligent architecture, were the effect of the most elaborate study. In their porticoes and gardens, they courted the sun whenever it so pleased their luxurious tastes. In the interior of their houses, they sought rather the coolness and the shade.

Julia's apartment at that season was in the lower part of the house, immediately beneath the state rooms above, and looking upon the garden, with which it was on a level. The wide door, which was glazed, alone admitted the morning rays: yet her eye, accustomed to a certain darkness, was sufficiently acute to perceive exactly what colours were the most becoming — what shade of the delicate rouge gave the brightest beam to her dark glance, and the most youthful freshness to her cheek."

On the table before which she sat was a small and circular mirror, of the most polished steel — round which, in precise order, were ranged the cosmetics and the unguents — the perfumes and the paints — the jewels and the combs — the ribands and the gold pins, which were destined to add to the natural attractions of beauty, the assistance of art, and the capricious allurements of fashion. Through the dimness of the room glowed brightly the vivid and various colourings of the wall in all the dazzling frescoes of Pompeian taste. Before the dressing-table, and under the feet of Julia, was spread a carpet, woven from the looms of the east. Near at hand, on another table, was a silver basin and ewer — an extinguished lamp, of most exquisite workmanship, in which the artist had represented a Cupid reposing under the spreading branches of a myrtle-tree; and a small roll of papyrus, containing the softest elegies of Tibullus. Before the door, which communicated with the cubiculum, hung a curtain, richly brodered with gold flowers. Such was the dressing-room of a beauty eighteen centuries ago.

The fair Julia leaned indolently back on her seat, while the ornatrix (i. e. hair-dresser) slowly piled one above the other a mass of small curls; dexterously weaving the false with the true, and carrying the whole fabric to a height that seemed to place the head rather at the centre than the summit of the human form.

Her tunic, of a deep amber, which well set off her dark hair and somewhat imbrowned complexion, swept in ample folds to her feet, which were cased in slippers, fastened round the slender ankle by white thongs; while a profusion of pearls were embroidered in the slipper itself, which was of purple, and turned slightly upward, as do the Turkish slippers at this day. An old slave, skilled by long experience in all the arcana of the toilette, stood beside the hair-dresser, with the broad and studded girdle of her mistress over her arm, and giving from time to time, (mingled with judicious flattery to the lady herself,) instructions to the mason of the ascending pile.

"Put that pin rather more to the right — lower — stupid one! Do you not observe how even those beautiful eyebrows are! — One would think you were dressing Corinna, whose face is all of one side. Now put in the flowers — what, fool! — not that dull pink — you are not suiting colours to the dim cheek of Chloris — it must be the brightest flowers that can alone suit the cheek of the young Julia."

"Gently!" said the lady, stamping her small foot violently, "you pull my hair as if you were plucking up a weed."

"Dull thing!" continued the directress of the ceremony, "do you not know how delicate is your mistress? — you are not dressing the coarse horse-hair of the widow Fulvia. Now, then, the riband — that's right. Fair Julia, look in the mirror — saw you ever any thing so lovely as yourself?"

When, after innumerable comments, difficulties, and delays, the intricate tower was at length completed, the next preparation was that of giving to the eyes the soft languish produced by a dark powder applied to the lids and brows — a small patch cut in the form of a crescent, skilfully placed by the rosy lips, attracted attention to their dimples, and to the teeth, to which

already every art had been applied in order to heighten the dazzle of her natural whiteness.

To another slave, hitherto idle, was now consigned the charge of arranging the jewels—the ear-rings of pearl, (two to each ear,) the massive bracelets of gold—the chain formed of rings of the same metal, to which a talisman, cut in crystals, was attached—the graceful buckle on the left shoulder, in which was set an exquisite cameo of *Psyche*—the girdle of purple riband, richly wrought with threads of gold, and clasped by interlacing serpents—and lastly, the various rings fitted to every joint of the white and slender fingers. The toilette was now arranged, according to the last mode of Rome. The fair Julia regarded herself with a last gaze of complaisant vanity, and reclining again upon her seat, she bade the youngest of her slaves, in a listless tone, read to her the enamoured couplets of Tibullus. This lecture was still proceeding, when a female slave admitted Nydia into the presence of the lady of the place.

“Salve, Julia,” said the flower-girl, arresting her steps within a few paces from the spot where Julia sat, and crossing her arms upon her breast, “I have obeyed your commands.”

“You have done well, flower-girl,” answered the lady, “approach, you may take a seat.”

One of the slaves placed a stool by Julia, and Nydia seated herself.

Julia looked hard at the Thessalian for some moments in rather an embarrassed silence. She then motioned her attendants to withdraw, and to close the door. When they were alone, she said, looking mechanically from Nydia, and forgetful that she was with one who could not observe her countenance,

“You serve the Neapolitan, Ione.”

“I am with her at present,” answered Nydia.

“Is she as handsome as they say?”

“I know not,” replied Nydia, “how can I judge?”

“Ah! I should have remembered, but thou hast ears if not eyes. Do thy fellow-slaves tell thee she is handsome? Slaves talking with one another, forget to flatter even their mistress.”

“They tell me that she is beautiful.”

“Hem!—say they that she is tall?”

“Yes.”

“Why, so am I—Dark haired?”

“I have heard so.”

“So am I. And doth Glaucus visit her much?”

“Daily,” returned Nydia, with a half-suppressed sigh.

“Daily, indeed! Does he find her handsome?”

“I should think so, since they are so soon to be wedded.”

“Wedded!” cried Julia, turning pale even through the false roses on her cheek, and starting from her couch: Nydia did not of course perceive the emotion she had caused. Julia remained a long time silent; but her heaving breast and flashing eyes would have betrayed to one who *could* have seen, the wound her vanity sustained.

“They tell me thou art a Thessalian,” said she, at last breaking silence.

“And truly!”

“Thessaly is the land of magic and of witches—of talismans and of love filters,” said Julia.

“It has ever been celebrated for its sorcerers,” returned Nydia, timidly.

“Knowest thou then, blind Thessalian, of any love charms?”

“I!” said the flower-girl, colouring, “I! how should I? No, assuredly not.”

“The worse for thee; I could have given thee gold enough to have purchased thy freedom hadst thou been more wise.”

"But what," asked Nydia, "can induce the beautiful and wealthy Julia to ask that question of her servant? Has she not money, and youth, and loveliness? Are *they* not love charms enough to dispense with magic?"

"To all but one person in the world," answered Julia, haughtily; "but methinks thy blindness is infectious — and — but no matter."

"And that one person?" said Nydia, eagerly.

"Is *not* Glaucus," replied Julia, with the customary deceit of her sex. "Glaucus — no!"

Nydia drew her breath more freely, and after a short pause Julia recommenced —

"But talking of Glaucus and his attachment to this Neapolitan, reminded me of the influence of love-spells, which, for aught I know or care, she may have exercised upon him. Blind girl, I love, and — shall Julia live to say it? — am loved not in return! This humbles — nay, not *humbles* — but it *stings* my pride. I would see this ingrate at my feet — not in order that I might raise, but that I might spurn him. When they told me thou wert Thessalian, I imagined thy young mind might have learned the dark secrets of thy clime."

"Alas! no," murmured Nydia, "would it had!"

"Thanks, at least, for that kindly wish," said Julia, unconscious of what was passing in the breast of the flower-girl. "But tell me, thou hearest the gossip of slaves always prone to these dim beliefs — always ready to apply to sorcery for their own low loves, — hast thou ever heard of any Eastern magician in this city who possesses the art of which thou art ignorant? No vain chiromancer, no juggler of the market-place, but some more potent and mighty magician of India or of Egypt!"

"Of Egypt, yes," said Nydia, shuddering; "what Pompeian has not heard of Arbaces!"

"Arbaces, true!" replied Julia, grasping at the recollection. "They say he is a man above all the petty and false impostures of dull pretenders — that he is versed in the learning of the stars, and the secrets of the ancient Nox; why not in the mysteries of love?"

"If there be one magician living whose art is above that of others, it is that dread man," answered Nydia, and she felt her talisman while she spoke.

"He is too wealthy to divine for money!" continued Julia, sneeringly. "can I not visit him?"

"It is an evil mansion for the young and the beautiful," replied Nydia. "I have heard, too, that he languishes in —"

"An evil mansion," said Julia, catching only the first sentence. "Why so?"

"The orgies of his midnight leisure are impure and polluted — at least so says rumour."

"By Ceres, by Pan, and by Cybele, thou dost but provoke my curiosity instead of exciting my fears," returned the wayward and pampered Pompeian. "I will seek and question him of his love. If to these orgies love be admitted — why the more likely that he knows its secrets."

Nydia did not answer.

"I will seek him this very day," resumed Julia; "nay, why not this very hour?"

"At daylight, and in his present state, thou hast assuredly the less to fear," answered Nydia, yielding to her own sudden and secret wish to learn if the dark Egyptian were indeed possessed of those spells to rivet and attract love, of which the Thessalian had so often heard.

"And who would dare insult the rich daughter of Diomed?" said Julia, haughtily. "I will go."

"May I visit thee afterward to learn the result?" asked Nydia anxiously.

"Kiss me for thy interest in Julia's honour," answered the lady. "Yes, assuredly. This eve we sup abroad — come hither at the same hour to-morrow, and thou shalt know all; I may have to employ thee too, but enough for the present. Stay, take this bracelet for the new thought thou hast inspired me with; remember, if thou servest Julia, she is grateful and she is generous."

"I cannot take thy present," said Nydia, putting aside the bracelet; "but, young as I am, I can sympathize unbought with those who love — and love in vain."

"Sayest thou so?" returned Julia; "thou speakest like a free woman — and thou shalt yet be free — farewell!"

CHAPTER VII.

JULIA SEEKS ARBACES — THE RESULT OF THAT INTERVIEW.

ARBACES was seated in a chamber, which opened on a kind of balcony or portico that fronted his garden. His cheek was pale and worn with the sufferings he had endured, but his iron frame had already recovered from the severest effects of that accident which had frustrated his fell designs in the moment of victory. The air that came fragrantly to his brow revived his languid senses, and the blood circulated, more freely than it had done for days, through his shrunken veins.

"So, then," thought he, "the storm of Fate has broken and blown over — the evil which my love predicted, threatening life itself, has chanced — and yet I live! It came as the stars foretold — and now the long, bright, and prosperous career which was to succeed that evil, if I survived it, smiles beyond — I have passed — I have subdued the latest danger of my destiny. Now I have but to lay out the gardens of my future fate — unterrified and secure. First, then, of all my pleasures — even before that of love — shall come revenge! This boy Greek — who has crossed my passion — thwarted my designs — baffled me even when the blade was about to drink his accursed blood — shall not a second time escape me. But for the method of my vengeance? Of that let me ponder well! Oh, Até, if thou art indeed a goddess, fill me with thy fullest inspiration!" The Egyptian sank into an intent revery, which did not seem to present to him any clear or satisfactory suggestions. He changed his position restlessly as he revolved scheme after scheme, which no sooner occurred than it was dismissed; several times he struck his breast and groaned aloud, with the desire of vengeance, and a sense of his impotence to accomplish it. While thus absorbed, a boy slave timidly entered the chamber.

"A female, evidently of rank from her dress, and that of the single slave who attended her, waited below and sought an audience with Arbaces."

"A female!" his heart beat quick. "Is she young?"

"Her face is concealed by her veil; but her form is slight, yet round, as that of youth."

"Admit her," said the Egyptian: for a moment his vain heart dreamed the stranger might be Ione.

The first glance of the visiter now entering the apartment, sufficed to undeceive so erring a fancy. True, she was about the same height as Ione, and perhaps the same age; true, she was finely and richly formed — but where was that undulating and ineffable grace which accompanied every motion of the peerless Neapolitan? the chaste and decorous garb, so sim-

ple even in the care of its arrangement? the dignified, yet bashful step? the majesty of womanhood and its modesty?

"Pardon me that I rise with pain," said Arbaces, gazing on the stranger; "I am still suffering from recent illness."

"Do not disturb thyself, O great Egyptian," returned Julia, seeking to disguise the fear she already experienced, beneath the ready resort of flattery; "and forgive an unfortunate female who seeks consolation from thy wisdom."

"Draw near, fair stranger," said Arbaces, "and speak without apprehension or reserve."

Julia placed herself on a seat beside the Egyptian, and wonderingly gazed round an apartment whose elaborate and costly luxuries shamed even the ornate enrichment of her father's mansion; fearfully, too, she regarded the hieroglyphical inscriptions on the walls — the faces of the mysterious images, which at every corner gazed upon her — the tripod at a little distance — and, above all, the grave and remarkable countenance of Arbaces himself: a long white robe, like a veil, half covered his raven locks, and flowed at his feet; his face was made even more impressive by its present paleness, and his dark and penetrating eyes seemed to pierce the shelter of her veil, and explore the secrets of her vain and unfeminine soul.

"And what," said his low deep voice, "brings thee, O maiden, to the house of the eastern stranger?"

"His fame," replied Julia.

"In what?" said he, with a strange and slight smile.

"Canst thou ask, O wise Arbaces? Is not thy knowledge the very gossip theme of Pompeii?"

"Some little lore have I, indeed, treasured up," replied Arbaces, "but in what can such serious and sterile secrets benefit the ear of beauty?"

"Alas!" said Julia, a little cheered by the accustomed accents of adulation, "does not sorrow fly to wisdom for relief, and they who love unrequitedly, are not they the chosen victims of grief?"

"Ah!" said Arbaces, "can unrequited love be the lot of so fair a form, whose modelled proportions are visible even beneath the folds of thy graceful robe? Deign, O maiden, to lift thy veil, that I may see at least if the face correspond in loveliness with the form."

Not unwilling, perhaps, to exhibit her charms, and thinking they were likely to interest the magician in her fate, Julia, after some slight hesitation, raised her veil, and revealed a beauty which, but for art, had been indeed attractive, to the fixed gaze of the Egyptian.

"Thou comest to me for advice in unhappy love?" said he: "well, turn that face on the ungrateful one: what other love-charm can I give thee?"

"Oh, cease these courtesies!" said Julia; "it is a love-charm, indeed, that I would ask from thy skill."

"Fair stranger," replied Arbaces, somewhat scornfully, "love-spells are not among a portion of the secrets I have wasted the midnight oil to attain."

"Is it indeed so? Then pardon me, great Arbaces, and farewell."

"Stay," said Arbaces, who, despite his passion for Ione, was not unmoved by the beauty of his visitor; and had he been in the flush of a more assured health, might have attempted to console the fair Julia by other means than those of supernatural wisdom.

"Stay; although I confess that I have left the witchery of filters and potions to those whose trade is in such knowledge, yet am I myself not so dull to beauty but what in earlier youth I may have employed them in my own behalf. I may give thee advice, at least, if thou wilt be candid with me: tell me, then, first, art thou unmarried, as thy dress betokens?"

"Yes," said Julia.

"And being unblest with fortune, wouldst thou allure some wealthy suitor?"

"I am richer than he who disdains me."

"Strange and more strange; and thou lovest him who loves not thee?"

"I know not if I love him," answered Julia, haughtily, "but I know that I would see myself triumph over a rival—I would see him who rejected me, my suitor—I would see her whom he has preferred, in her turn despised."

"A natural ambition and a womanly," said the Egyptian, in a tone too grave for irony: "yet more, fair maiden; wilt thou confide to me the name of thy lover? Can he be Pompeian, and despise wealth, even if blind to beauty?"

"He is of Athens," answered Julia, looking down.

"Ha!" cried the Egyptian, impetuously, as the blood rushed to his cheek; "there is but one Athenian, young and noble in Pompeii. Can it be Glaucus of whom thou speakest?"

"Ah, betray me not—so indeed they call him."

The Egyptian sunk back, gazing vacantly on the averted face of the merchant's daughter, and muttering inly to himself—this conference with which he had hitherto only trifled, amusing himself at the credulity and vanity of his visiter—might it not minister to his revenge?

"I see thou canst assist me not," said Julia, offended by his continued silence; "guard at least my secret—Once more farewell!"

"Maiden," said the Egyptian, in an earnest and serious tone, "thy suit hath touched me—I will minister to thy will. Listen to me; I have not myself dabbled in these lesser mysteries—but I know one who hath. At the base of Vesuvius, less than a league from the city, there dwells a powerful witch; beneath the rank dews of the new moon, she has gathered the herbs which possess the virtue to chain love in eternal fetters. Her art can bring thy lover to thy feet. Seek her, and mention to her the name of Arbaces; she fears that name, and will give thee her most potent filters."

"Alas!" answered Julia, "I know not the road to the home of her thou speakest of: the way, short though it be, is long to traverse for a girl who leaves, unknown, the house of her father. The country is entangled with wild vines, and dangerous with precipitous caverns. I dare not trust to mere strangers to guide me—the reputation of women of my rank is easily tarnished—and though I care not who knows that I love Glaucus, I would not have it imagined that I obtained his love by a spell."

"Were I but three days advanced in health," said the Egyptian, rising and walking (as if to try his strength) across the chamber, but with irregular and feeble steps, "I myself would accompany thee.—Well, thou must wait."

"But Glaucus is soon to wed that hated Neapolitan."

"Wed?"

"Yes, in the early part of next month."

"So soon; art thou well advised of this?"

"From the lips of her own slave."

"It shall not be!" said the Egyptian, impetuously; "fear nothing, Glaucus shall be thine. Yet how, when thou obtainest it, canst thou administer to him this potion?"

"My father has invited him, and, I believe, the Neapolitan also, to a banquet, on the day following to-morrow; I shall then have the opportunity to administer it."

"So be it!" said the Egyptian, with eyes flashing such fierce joy, that Julia's gaze sunk tremblingly beneath them.

"To-morrow eve, then, order thy litter; thou hast one at thy command?"

"Surely — yes," returned the purse-proud Julia.

"Order thy litter — at two miles distance from the city is a house of entertainment, frequented by the wealthier Pompeians, from the excellence of its baths and the beauty of its gardens. There canst thou pretend only to shape thy course — there, ill or dying, I will meet thee by the statue of Silenus, in the copse that skirts the garden; and I myself will guide thee to the witch. Let us wait till, with the evening star, the goats of the herdsman are gone to rest — when the dark twilight conceals us, and none shall cross our steps. Go home and fear not. By Hades! swears Arbaces, the sorcerer of Egypt, that Ione shall never wed with Glaucus!"

"And that Glaucus shall be mine?" added Julia, filling up the incomplete sentence.

"Thou hast said it!" replied Arbaces — and Julia, half frightened at this unhalloved appointment, but urged on by jealousy and the pique of rivalry even more than love, resolved to fulfil it.

Left alone, Arbaces burst forth —

"Bright stars that never lie, ye already begin the execution of your promises — success in love, and victory over foes, for the rest of my smooth existence! In the very hour when my mind could devise no clew to the goal of vengeance, hast thou sent this fair fool for my guide!" — He paused in deep thought. — "Yes," said he again, but in a calmer voice; "I could not myself have given to her the poison that shall be indeed a filter! — his death might be thus tracked to my door. But the witch — ay, *there* is the fit, the natural agent of my designs!"

He summoned one of his slaves, bade him hasten to track the steps of Julia, and acquaint himself with her name and condition. This done, he stepped forth into the portico. The skies were serene and clear — but he, deeply read in the signs of their various change, beheld in one mass of cloud far on the horizon, which the wind began slowly to agitate, that a storm was brooding above.

"It is like my vengeance," said he, as he gazed; "the sky is clear, but the cloud moves on."

CHAPTER VIII.

A STORM IN THE SOUTH — THE WITCH'S CAVERN.

It was when the heats of noon died gradually away from the earth, that Glaucus and Ione went forth to enjoy the cooled and grateful air. At that time various carriages were in use among the Romans: the one most used by the richer citizens, when they required no companion in their excursions, was the *biga*, already described in the early portion of this work; that appropriated to the matrons, was termed *carpentum*,* which had commonly two wheels; the ancients used also a sort of litter, a vast sedan-chair, more commodiously arranged than the modern, inasmuch as the occupant thereof could lie down at ease, instead of being perpendicularly and stiffly jostled up and down.† There was another carriage used both for travelling and for excursions in the country; it was commodious, containing three or four persons with ease, having a covering which could be raised at pleasure; and in short, answering very much the purpose of (though very different in shape from) the modern *britska*. It was a vehicle of this descrip-

* For public festivals and games, they used one more luxurious and costly, called *pilentum*, with four wheels.

† But they had also the *sella*, or sedan, in which they sat as we do.

tion that the lovers, accompanied by one female slave of Ione, now used in their excursion. About ten miles from the city there was at that day an old ruin, the remains of a temple, evidently Grecian; and as for Glaucus and Ione every thing Grecian possessed an interest, they had agreed to visit these ruins — it was thither they were now bound.

Their road lay among vines and olive groves; till, winding more and more towards the higher ground of Vesuvius, the path grew rugged — the mules moved slowly, and with labour — and at every opening in the wood, they beheld those gray and horrent caverns indenting the parched rock, which Strabo has described; but which the various revolutions of time and the volcano have removed from the present aspect of the mountain. The sun, sloping towards his descent, cast long and deep shadows over the mountain; here and there they still heard the rustic reed of the shepherd, among copses of the beechwood and wild oak. Sometimes they marked the form of the silk-haired and graceful capella, with its wreathing horn and bright gray eye, which, still beneath Ausonian skies, recalls the eclogues of Maro, browsing half way up the hills; and the grapes, already purple with the smiles of the deepening summer, glowed out from the arched festoons, which hung pendant from tree to tree. Above them, light clouds floated in the serene heavens, sweeping so slowly athwart the firmament, that they scarcely seemed to stir; while on their right they caught, ever and anon, glimpses of the waveless sea, with some light bark skimming its surface, and the sunlight breaking over the deep in those countless and softest hues so peculiar to that delicious sea.

"How beautiful!" said Glaucus, in a half-whispered tone, "is that epithet by which we call Earth our Mother. With what a kindly and equal love she pours her blessings upon her children; and even to those sterile spots to which Nature has denied beauty, she yet contrives to dispense her smiles; witness the arbutus and the vine, which she wreaths over the arid and burning soil of yon extinct volcano. Ah! in such an hour and scene as this! — well might we imagine that the laughing face of the faun should peep forth from those green festoons; or, that we might trace the steps of the mountain nymph through the thickest mazes of the glade. But the nymphs ceased — beautiful Ione, when *thou* wast created!"

There is no tongue that flatters like a lover's, and yet in the exaggeration of his feelings, flattery seems to him commonplace. Strange and prodigal exuberance, which soon exhausts itself by overflowing! They tell us, that the esteem which follows passion is happier than passion itself: — it may be true — the springs of fancy — of hope — of ambition — all urged into one channel, return to their natural streams. Love is a revolution — there is no harmony — no order — there is, therefore, no settled happiness while it lasts; but when the revolution is over — we are astonished at our past phrensy; we may love still — we may be beloved — but we are in *love* no more! For my part, I think there are some kinds of imperfect happiness which are better than the perfect. Take away desire from the heart, and you take the air from the earth.

They arrived at the ruins; they examined them with that fondness with which we trace the hallowed and household vestiges of our own ancestry — they lingered there till Hesperus appeared in the rosy heavens; and then returning homeward in the twilight, they were more silent than they had been — for in the shadow and beneath the stars, they felt more oppressively their mutual love.

It was at this time that the storm which the Egyptian had predicted began to creep visibly over them. At first, a low and distant thunder gave warning of the approaching conflict of the elements; and then rapidly rushed above the dark ranks of the serried clouds. The suddenness of storms in that climate is something almost preternatural, and might well suggest to

early superstition the notion of a divine agency — a few large drops broke heavily among the boughs that half overhung their path, and then, swift and intolerably bright, the forked lightning darted across their very eyes, and was swallowed up by the increasing darkness.

"Swifter, good Carrucarius," cried Glaucus to the driver, "the tempest comes on apace."

The slave urged on the mules — they went swift over the uneven and stony road — the clouds thickened; near and more near broke the thunder, and fast rushed the dashing rain.

"Dost thou fear?" whispered Glaucus, as he sought excuse in the storm to come nearer to Ione.

"Not with thee," said she, softly.

At that instant the carriage — fragile and ill-contrived (as, despite their graceful shapes, were, for practical uses, most of such inventions at that time) — struck violently into a deep rut, over which lay a log of fallen wood: the driver with a curse stimulated his mules yet faster for the obstacle, the wheel was torn from the socket, and the carriage suddenly overset.

Glaucus, quickly extricating himself from the vehicle, hastened to assist Ione, who was fortunately unhurt: with some difficulty they raised the caruca (or carriage), and found that it ceased any longer even to afford them shelter: the springs that fastened the covering were snapped asunder, and the rain poured fast and fiercely into the interior.

In this dilemma, what was to be done! They were yet some distance from the city — no house, no aid seemed near.

"There is," said the slave, "a smith about a mile off; I could seek him, and he might fasten at least the wheel to the caruca — but, Jupiter! how the rain beats! my mistress will be wet before I come back."

"Run thither at least," said Glaucus; "we must find the best shelter we can till you return."

The lane was overshadowed with trees, beneath the amplest of which Glaucus drew Ione. He endeavoured, by slipping his own cloak, to shield her yet more from the rapid rain; but it descended with a fury that broke through all puny obstacles, and suddenly, while Glaucus was yet whispering courage to his beautiful charge, the lightning struck one of the trees immediately before them, and split with a mighty crash its huge trunk in twain. This awful incident apprised them of the danger they braved in their present shelter, and Glaucus looked anxiously round for some less perilous place of refuge. "We are now," said he, "half-way up the ascent of Vesuvius; there ought to be some cavern or hollow in the vine-clad rocks, could we but find it, in which the deserting nymphs have left a shelter." While thus saying he moved from the trees, and looking wistfully towards the mountain, discovered through the advancing gloom a red and tremulous light at no considerable distance. "That must come," said he, "from the hearth of some shepherd or vine-dresser — it will guide us to some hospitable retreat. Wilt thou stay here while I — yet no — that would be to leave thee to danger."

"I will go with you cheerfully," said Ione: "open as the space seems, it is better than the treacherous shelter of these boughs."

Half leading, half carrying Ione, Glaucus, accompanied by the trembling slave, advanced towards the light, which yet burned blue and steadfastly. At length, the space was no longer open, wild vines entangled their steps, and hid from them, save by imperfect intervals, the guiding beam. But faster and fiercer came the rain, and the lightning assumed its most deadly and blasting form; they were still, therefore, impelled onward, hoping at last, if the light eluded them, to arrive at some cottage, or some friendly cavern. The vines grew more and more intricate — the light was entirely snatched from them; but a narrow path, which they trod with la-

hour and pain, guided only by the constant and long lingering flashes of the storm, continued to lead them towards its direction. The rain ceased suddenly; precipitous and rough crags of scorched lava frowned before them, rendered more fearful by the lightning that illumined the dark and dangerous soil. Sometimes the blaze lingered over the iron-gray heaps of scoria, covered in part with ancient mosses or stunted trees, as if seeking in vain for some gentler product of earth more worthy of its ire; and sometimes leaving the whole of that part of the scene in darkness, the lightning, broad and sheeted, hung redly over the ocean, tossing far below until its waves seemed glowing into fire; and so intense was the blaze that it brought vividly into view even the sharp outline of the more distant windings of the bay, from the eternal Misenum, with its lofty brow, to the beautiful Sorrentum and the giant hills behind.

Our lovers stopped in perplexity and doubt, when suddenly, as the darkness that gloomed between the fierce flashes of lightning once more wrapped them round, they saw near, but high before them, the mysterious light. Another blaze, in which heaven and earth were reddened, made visible to them the whole expanse; no house was near, but just where they had beheld the light, they thought they saw in the recess of a cavern the outline of a human form. The darkness once more returned: the light, no longer paled beneath the fires of heaven, burnt forth again: they resolved to ascend towards it; they had to wind their way among vast fragments of stone, here and there overhung with wild bushes; but they gained nearer and nearer to the light, and at length they stood opposite the mouth of a kind of cavern, apparently formed by huge splinters of rock that had fallen transversely athwart each other: and looking into the gloom, each drew back involuntarily with a superstitious fear and chill.

A fire burned in the far recess of the cave—and over it was a small caldron; on a tall and thin column of iron stood a rude lamp; over that part of the wall at the base of which burned the fire hung, in many rows, as if to dry, a profusion of herbs and weeds. A fox, couched before the fire, gazed upon the strangers with its bright and red eye—its hair bristling—and a low growl stealing from between its teeth; in the centre of the cave was an earthen statue, which had three heads of a singular and fantastic cast; they were formed by the real skulls of a dog, a horse, and a boar; a low tripod stood before this wild representation of the popular Hecate.

But it was not these appendages and appliances of the cave that thrilled the blood of those who gazed fearfully therein—it was the face of its inmate. Before the fire, with the light shining full upon her features, sat a woman of considerable age. Perhaps in no country are there seen so many hags as in Italy—in no country does beauty so awfully change, in age, to hideousness the most appalling and revolting. But the old woman now before them was not one of these specimens of the extreme of human ugliness; on the contrary—her countenance betrayed the remains of a regular but high and aquiline order of feature;—with stony eyes turned upon them—with a look that met and fascinated theirs—they beheld in that fearful countenance the very image of a corpse!—the same, the glazed and lustreless regard—the blue and shrunken lips—the drawn and hollow jaw—the dead—lank hair—of a pale gray—the livid—green—ghastly skin—which seemed all surely tinged and tainted by the grave!

“It is a dead thing!” said Glaucus.

“Nay—it stirs—it is a ghost or *larva*,” faltered Ione, as she clung to the Athenian’s breast.

“Oh, away—away!”—groaned the slave; “it is the Witch of Vesuvius.”

“Who are ye?” said a hollow and ghostly voice. “And what do ye here?”

The sound, terrible and death-like as it was — suiting well the countenance of the speaker — and seeming rather the voice of some bodiless wanderer of the Styx, than living mortal — would have made Ione shrink back into the pitiless fury of the storm — but Glaucus — though not without some misgiving — drew her into the cavern.

"We are storm-beaten wanderers from the neighbouring city," said he, "and decoyed hither by yon light, we crave shelter and the comfort of your hearth."

As he spoke the fox rose from the ground, and advanced towards the strangers, showing from end to end its white teeth — and deepening in its menacing growl.

"Down, slave!" said the witch; and at the sound of her voice the beast dropped at once, covering its face with its brush, and keeping only its quick, vigilant eye fixed upon the invaders of its repose. "Come to the fire, if ye will!" said she, turning to Glaucus and his companions. "I never welcome living thing — save the owl, the fox, the toad, and the viper — so I cannot welcome ye; but come to the fire without welcome — why stand upon form?"

The language in which the hag addressed them was a strange and barbarous Latin, interlarded with many words of some more rude and ancient dialect. She did not stir from her seat, but gazed stonily upon them as Glaucus now released Ione of her outer wrapping garments, and making her place herself on a log of wood, which was the only other seat he perceived at hand — fanned with his breath the embers into a more glowing flame. The slave, encouraged by the boldness of her superiors, divested herself also of her long *palla*, and crept timorously to the opposite corner of the hearth.

"We disturb you, I fear," said the silver voice of Ione, in conciliation.

The witch did not reply — she seemed like one who has awakened for a moment from the dead, and then relapsed once more into the eternal slumber.

"Tell me," said she suddenly, and after a long pause, "are ye brother and sister?"

"No," said Ione, blushing.

"Are ye married?"

"Not so," replied Glaucus.

"Ho, lovers! — ha — ha — ha!" and the witch laughed so loud and so long that the caverns rang again.

The heart of Ione stood still at that strange mirth. Glaucus muttered a rapid counterspell to the omen — and the slave turned as pale as the cheek of the witch herself.

"Why dost thou laugh — old crone?" said Glaucus somewhat sternly, as he concluded his invocation.

"Did I laugh?" said the hag, absently.

"She is in her dotage," whispered Glaucus; as he said thus, he caught the glance of the hag, who fixed upon him a malignant and vivid glare.

"Thou liest!" said she, abruptly.

"Thou art an uncourteous welcomer," returned Glaucus.

"Hush! provoke her not, dear Glaucus!" whispered Ione.

"I will tell thee why I laughed when I discovered ye were lovers," said the old woman. "It was because it is a pleasure to the old and withered to look upon young hearts like yours — and to know the time will come when we will loathe each other — loathe — loathe — ha — ha — ha!"

It was now Ione's turn to pray against the displeasing prophecy.

"*Di avertite omen* — the gods forbid!" said she. "Yet, poor woman, thou knowest little of love, or thou wouldst know that it never changes."

"Was I young once, think ye?" returned the hag, quickly; "and am I

old, and hideous, and deathly now? Such as is the form, so is the heart." With these words she sunk again into a stillness profound and fearful, as if the cessation of life itself.

"Hast thou dwelt here long?" said Glaucus — after a pause — feeling uncomfortably oppressed beneath a silence so appalling.

"Ah, long! — yes."

"It is but a drear abode."

"Ha! thou mayest well say that — Hell is beneath us!" replied the hag, pointing her bony finger to the earth. "And I will tell thee a secret — the dim things below are preparing wrath for ye above — you, the young — and the thoughtless — and the beautiful."

"Thou utterest but evil words, ill becoming the hospitable," said Glaucus; "and in future I will brave the tempest rather than thy welcome."

"Thou wilt do well. None should ever seek me — save the wretched!"

"And why the wretched?" asked the Athenian.

"I am the witch of the mountain," replied the sorceress, with a ghastly grin; "my trade is to give hope to the hopeless; for the crossed in love, I have filters; for the avaricious, promises of treasure; for the malicious, potions of revenge; for the happy and the good, I have only what life has — curses! — Trouble me no more."

With this the grim tenant of the cave relapsed into a silence so obstinate and sullen, that Glaucus in vain endeavoured to draw her into further conversation. She did not evince by any alteration of her locked and rigid features that she even heard him. Fortunately, however, the storm, which was brief as violent, began now to relax; the rain grew less and less fierce — and at last — as the clouds parted, the moon burst forth in the purple opening of heaven — and streamed clear and full into that desolate abode. Never had she shone perhaps, on a group more worthy of the painter's art. The young — the all-beautiful Ione — seated by that rude fire — her lover, already forgetful of the presence of the hag, at her feet — gazing upward to her face, and whispering sweet words — the pale and affrighted slave at a little distance — and the ghastly hag resting her deadly eyes upon them: yet seemingly serene and fearless — (for the companionship of love hath such power) — were these beautiful beings — things of another sphere — in that dark and unholy cavern with its gloomy quaintness of appertenance. The fox regarded them from his corner with his keen and glowing eye — and as Glaucus now turned towards the witch — he perceived, for the first time, just under her seat, the bright gaze and crested head of a large snake — whether it was that the vivid colouring of the Athenian cloak, thrown over the shoulders of Ione, attracted the reptile's anger — its crest began to glow and rise, as if menacing and preparing itself to spring upon the Neapolitan; Glaucus caught quickly at one of the half-burned logs upon the hearth — and, as if enraged at the action, the snake came forth from its shelter, and with a loud hiss raised itself on end till its height nearly approached that of the Greek.

"Witch!" cried Glaucus, "command thy creature, or thou wilt see it dead."

"It has been despoiled of its venom!" said the witch, aroused at his threat; but ere the words had left her lip the snake had sprung upon Glaucus: quick and watchful, the agile Greek leaped lightly aside, and struck so fell and dexterous a blow on the head of the snake, that it fell prostrate and writhing among the embers of the fire.

The hag sprung up — and stood confronting Glaucus with a face which would have befitted the fiercest of the Furies, so utterly dire and wrathful was its expression — yet even in horror and ghastliness preserving the outline and trace of beauty — and utterly free from that coarse grotesque at which the imaginations of the North have sought the source of terror.

"Thou hast," said she, in a low and steady voice — which belied the expression of her face, so much was it passionless and calm — "thou hast had shelter under my roof, and warmth at my hearth — thou hast returned evil for good — thou hast smitten and haply slain the thing that loved me and was mine — nay more — the creature, above all others, consecrated to gods and deemed venerable by man* — now hear thy punishment. By the moon — who is the guardian of the sorceress — by Orcus — who is the treasurer of wrath — I curse thee! and thou art cursed! May thy love be blasted — may thy name be blackened — may the infernals mark thee — may thy heart wither and scorch — may thy last hour recall to thee the prophet voice of the saga of Vesuvius. And thou," she added, turning sharply towards Ione — and raising her right arm — when Glaucus burst impetuously on her speech.

"Hag!" cried he, "forbear! Me thou hast cursed, and I commit myself to the gods — I defy and scorn thee: but breathe but one word against yon maiden, and I will convert the oath on thy foul lips to thy dying groan — beware!"

"I have done," replied the hag — laughing wildly — "for in thy doom is she who loves thee accursed. And not the less, that I heard *her* lips breathe thy name, and know by what word to commend thee to the demons. *Glaucus* — thou art doomed!" So saying, the witch turned from the Athenian, and kneeling down beside her wounded favourite, which she dragged from the hearth, she turned to them her face no more.

"O *Glaucus*!" said Ione, greatly terrified — "what have we done! — let us hasten from this place! — the storm has ceased. Good mistress, forgive him — recall thy words — he meant but to defend himself — accept this peace-offering to unsay the said;" and Ione stooping, placed her purse on the hag's lap.

"Away!" said she, bitterly — "away! The oath once woven the fates only can untie — away!"

"Come, dearest!" said Glaucus, impatiently. "Thinkest thou that the gods above or below us hear the impotent ravings of dotage? — come!"

Long and loud rang the echoes of the cavern with the dread laugh of the saga — she deigned no further reply.

The lovers breathed more freely when they gained the open air — yet the scene they had witnessed — the words and the laughter of the witch — still fearfully dwelt with Ione — and even Glaucus could not thoroughly shake off the impression they bequeathed. The storm had subsided — save now and then a low thunder muttered at the distance amid the darker clouds, or a momentary flash of lightning affronted the sovereignty of the moon. With some difficulty they regained the road — where they found the vehicle already sufficiently repaired for their departure — and the carucarius, calling loudly upon Hercules, to tell him where his charge had vanished.

Glaucus vainly endeavoured to cheer the exhausted spirits of Ione; and scarce less vainly to recover the elastic tone of his own natural gayety. They soon arrived before the gate of the city; as it opened to them, a litter borne by slaves impeded the way.

"It is too late for egress," cried the sentinel to the inmate of the litter.

"Not so," said a voice, which the lovers started to hear; it was a voice they well recognised. "I am bound to the villa of Marcus Polybius. I shall return shortly. I am Arbaces, the Egyptian."

* A popular sanctity was attached by the Romans (as indeed by perhaps every ancient people) to serpents, which they kept tame in their houses, and often introduced at their meals.

The scruples of him of the gate were removed, and the litter passed close beside the carriage that bore the lovers.

"Arbaces, at this hour! — scarce recovered too, methinks, — whither and for what can he leave the city?" said Glaucus.

"Alas!" replied Ione, bursting into tears, "my soul feels still more and more the omen of evil. Preserve us, O ye gods! or at least," she murmured inly, "preserve my Glaucus!"

CHAPTER IX.

THE LORD OF THE BURNING BELT AND HIS MINION — FATE WRITES HER PROPHECY IN RED LETTERS, BUT WHO SHALL READ THEM.

ARBACES had tarried only till the cessation of the tempest allowed him, under cover of night, to seek the saga of Vesuvius. Borne by those of his trustier slaves in whom in all more secret expeditions he was accustomed to confide, he lay extended along his litter, and resigning his sanguine heart to the contemplation of vengeance gratified and love possessed. The slaves in so short a journey moved very little slower than the ordinary pace of mules; and Arbaces soon arrived at the commencement of a narrow path, which the lovers had not been fortunate enough to discover; but which, skirting the thick vines, led at once to the habitation of the witch. Here he arrested the litter; and bidding his slaves conceal themselves and the vehicle among the vines, from the observation of any chance passenger, he mounted alone, with steps still feeble, but supported by a long staff, the drear and sharp ascent.

Not a drop of rain fell from the tranquil heaven; but the moisture dripped mournfully from the laden boughs of the vine, and now and then collected in tiny pools in the crevices and hollows of the rocky way.

"Strange passions these for a philosopher," thought Arbaces, "that lead one like me just new from the bed of death, and lapped even in health amid the roses of luxury, across such nocturnal paths as this — but Passion and Vengeance treading to their goal can make an Elysium of a Tartarus." High, clear, and melancholy shone the moon above the road of that dark wayfarer, glassing herself in every pool that lay before him, and sleeping in shadow along the sloping mount. He saw before him the same light that had guided the steps of his intended victims, but, no longer contrasted by the blackened clouds, it shone less redly clear.

He paused, as at length he approached the mouth of the cavern, to recover breath, and then with his wonted collected and stately mien, he crossed the unhallowed threshold.

The fox sprang up at the ingress of this new comer, and by a long howl announced another visiter to his mistress.

The witch had resumed her seat, and her aspect of grave-like and grim repose. By her feet, upon a bed of dry weeds which half covered it, lay the wounded snake; but the quick eye of the Egyptian caught its scales glittering in the reflected light of the opposite fire, as it writhed — now contracting, now lengthening its folds, in pain and unsated anger.

"Down, slave!" said the witch, as before, to the fox; and, as before, the animal dropped to the ground — mute but vigilant.

"Rise, Servant of Nox and Erebus," said Arbaces, commandingly, "a superior in thine art salutes thee! rise and welcome him."

At these words the hag turned her gaze upon the Egyptian's towering form and dark features. She looked long and fixedly upon him, as he stood

before her in his oriental robe, and folded arms, and steadfast and haughty brow; "Who art thou?" she said at last, "that calls himself greater in art than the Saga of the Burning Fields, and the daughter of the perished Etrurian race?"

"I am he," answered Arbaces, "from whom all cultivators of magic, from north to south, from east to west, from the Ganges and the Nile to the vales of Thessaly and the shores of the yellow Tiber—have stooped to learn."

"There is but one such man in these places," answered the witch, "whom the men of the outer world, unknowing his higher attributes and more secret fame, call Arbaces the Egyptian: to us of a higher nature and deeper knowledge, his rightful appellation is *Hermes of the Burning Girdle*."

"Look again," returned Arbaces; "I am he."

As he spake he drew aside his robe and revealed a cincture seemingly of fire, that burnt around his waste, clasped in the centre by a plate wherein was engraven some sign apparently vague and unintelligible, but which was evidently not unknown to the saga. She rose hastily and threw herself at the feet of Arbaces. "I have seen then," said she, in a voice of deep humility, "the Lord of the Mighty Girdle—vouchsafe my homage."

"Rise," said the Egyptian—"I have need of thee."

So saying he placed himself on that same log of wood on which Ione had rested before, and motioned to the witch to resume her seat.

"Thou sayest," said he, as she obeyed, "that thou art a daughter of the ancient Etrurian* tribes; the mighty walls of whose rock-built cities yet frown above the robber race that hath seized upon their ancient reign. Partly came those tribes from Greece, partly were they exiles from a more burning and primeval soil. In either case art thou of Egyptian lineage, for the Grecian masters of the aboriginal helot were among the restless sons of the Nile banished from her bosom. Equally then, oh Saga! art thou of ancestors that swore allegiance to mine own. By birth as by knowledge art thou the subject of Arbaces. Hear me then, and obey!"

The witch bowed her head.

"Whatever art we possess in sorcery," continued Arbaces, "we are sometimes driven to natural means to attain our object. The ring† and the crystal,‡ the ashes§ and the herbs,|| do not give unerring divinations; neither do the higher mysteries of the moon yield even the possessor of the girdle a dispensation from the necessity of employing ever and anon human measures for a human object: mark me, then; thou art deeply skilled, methinks, in the secrets of the more deadly herbs; thou knowest those which arrest life, which burn and scorch the soul from out her citadel, or freeze the channels of young blood into that ice which no sun can melt. Do I overrate thy skill? speak, and truly!"

"Mighty Hermes, such lore is indeed mine own. Deign to look at these ghostly and corpse-like features; they have waned from the hues of life, merely by watching over the rank herbs which simmer night and day in yon caldron."

The Egyptian moved his seat from so unblest or so unhealthful a vicinity, as the witch spoke.

"It is well," said he, "thou hast learned that maxim of all the deeper knowledge which saith: 'Despise the body to make wise the mind.' But to thy task; there cometh to thee by to-morrow's starlight a vain maiden, seeking of thine art a love-charm to fascinate from another the eyes that should utter but soft tales to her own; instead of thy filters, give the maiden

* The Etrurians (it may be superfluous to mention) were celebrated for their enchantments.

† Δακτυλομαντεία. ‡ Κρυστολογμαντεία. § Τάφρομαντεία. || Βοτανολομαντεία.

one of thy most powerful poisons. Let the lover breathe his vows to the Shades."

The witch trembled from head to foot.

"Oh pardon! pardon! dread master," said she, falteringly, "but this I dare not. The law in these cities is sharp and vigilant; they will seize, they will slay me."

"For what purpose, then, thy herbs and thy potions, vain Saga?" said Arbaces, sneeringly.

The witch hid her loathsome face with her hands.

"Oh, years ago!" said she, in a voice unlike her usual tones, so plaintive was it, and so soft, "I was not the thing that I am now, — I loved, I fancied myself beloved."

"And what connexion hath thy love, witch, with my commands?" said Arbaces, impetuously.

"Patience," resumed the witch, "patience, I implore. I loved! another and less fair than I — yes, by Nemesis! less fair; allured from me my chosen. I was of that dark Etrurian tribe to whom most of all were known the secrets of the gloomier magic. My mother was herself a saga; she shared the resentment of her child; from her hands I received the potion that was to restore me his love; and from her also the poison that was to destroy my rival. Oh, crush me, dread walls! my trembling hands mistook the vials, my lover fell indeed at my feet; but, dead! dead! Since then, what has been life to me? I became suddenly old, I devoted myself to the sorceries of my race; still by an irresistible impulse I curse myself with an awful penance; still I seek the most noxious herbs; still I concoct the poisons; still I imagine that I am to give them to my hated rival; still I pour them into the vial; still I fancy that they shall blast her beauty to the dust; still I wake and see the quivering body, the foaming lips, the glazing eyes of my Aulus — murdered, and by me."

The skeleton frame of the witch shook beneath strong convulsions.

Arbaces gazed upon her with a curious though contemptuous eye.

"And this foul thing has yet human emotions," thought he; "she still covers over the ashes of the same fire that consumes Arbaces — such are we all! Mystic is the tie of those mortal passions that unite the greatest and the least."

He did not reply till she had somewhat recovered herself — and now sat rocking herself to and fro in her seat, with glassy eyes, fixed on the opposite flame, and large tears rolling down her livid cheeks.

"A grievous tale is thine in truth," said Arbaces; "but these emotions are fit only for our youth — age should harden our hearts to all things but ourselves — as every year adds a scale to the shell-fish, so should each year wall and incrust the heart. Think of those phrensies no more! And now, listen to me again! By the revenge that was dear to thee, I command thee to obey me! it is for vengeance that I seek thee! This youth whom I would sweep from my path has crossed me — despite my spells; this thing of purple and broidery — of smiles and glances — soulless and mindless — with no charm but that of beauty — accursed be it! — this insect — this Glaucus — I tell thee, by Orcus and by Nemesis, he must die!"

And working himself up at every word, the Egyptian — forgetful of his debility — of his strange companion — of every thing but his own vindictive rage, strode, with large and rapid steps, the gloomy cavern.

"Glaucus! saidst thou, mighty master?" said the witch, abruptly; and her dim eye glared at the name with all that fierce resentment at the memory of small affronts so common among the solitary and the shunned.

"Ay, so he is called; but what matters the name? Let it not be heard as that of a living man, three days from this date!"

"Hear me!" said the witch, breaking from a short reverie into which she

was plunged after this last sentence of the Egyptian. "Hear me! I am thy thing and thy slave; spare me! If I give to the maiden thou speakest of that which would destroy the life of Glaucus, I shall be surely detected — the dead ever find avengers. Nay, dread man! if thy visit to me be tracked — if thy hatred to Glaucus be known — thou mayst have need of thy arcest magic to protect thyself!"

"Ha!" said Arbaces, stopping suddenly short — and as a proof of that blindness with which passion darkens the eyes even of the most acute — this was the first time — when the risk that he himself run by this method of vengeance had occurred to a mind ordinarily wary and circumspect.

"But," continued the witch, "if instead of that which shall arrest the heart, I give that which shall sear and blast the brain — which shall make him who quaffs it unfit for the uses and career of life — an abject, raving, benighted thing — smiting sense to drivelling, youth to dotage — will not thy vengeance be equally sated — thy object equally attained?"

"Oh, witch! no longer the servant, but the sister — the equal of Arbaces — how much brighter is woman's wit even in vengeance that ours! how much more exquisite than death is such a doom!"

"And," continued the hag, gloating over her fell scheme — "in this is but little danger — for by ten thousand methods, which men forbear to seek, can our victim become mad. He may have been among the vines and seen a nymph;* or the vine itself may have had the same effect; ha, ha! they never inquire too scrupulously into these matters, in which the gods may be agents. And let the worst arrive — let it be known that it is a love charm — why madness is a common effect of filters — and even the fair she that gave its finds indulgence in the excuse. Mighty Hermes, have I ministered to thee cunningly?"

"Thou shalt have twenty years longer date for this," returned Arbaces, — "I will write a new epoch of thy fate on the face of the pale stars — thou shalt not serve in vain the master of the Flaming Belt. And here, Saga, carve thee out, by these golden tools, a warmer cell in this dreary cavern — one service to me shall countervail a thousand divinations by sieve and shears to the gaping rustics." So saying, he cast upon the floor a heavy purse, which clinked not unmusically to the ear of the hag, who loved the consciousness of possessing the means to purchase comforts she disdained. "Farewell!" said Arbaces, "fail not — outwatch the stars in concocting thy beverage — thou shalt lord it over thy sisters at the walnut-tree† when thou tellest them that thy patron and thy friend is Hermes the Egyptian. To-morrow night we meet again."

He stayed not to hear the valediction or the thanks of the witch; with a quick step he passed into the moonlit air, and hastened down the mountain.

The witch, who followed his steps to the threshold, stood long at the entrance of the cavern — gazing fixedly on his receding form; and as the sad moonlight streamed upon her shadowy form and death-like face emerging from the dismal rocks — it seemed as if one gifted indeed by supernatural magic had escaped from the dreary Orcus; and the foremost of its ghostly throng stood at its black portals, vainly summoning his return, or vainly sighing to rejoin him. The hag then slowly re-entering the cave, picked groaningly up the heavy purse, took the lamp from its stand, and passing to the remotest depth of her cell — a black and abrupt passage, which was not visible, save at a near approach, closed round as it was with jutting and sharp crags, yawned before her; she went several yards along this

* To see a nymph was to become mad, according to classic and popular superstition.

† The celebrated and immemorial rendezvous of the witches, at Benevento. The winged serpent attached to it, long an object of idolatry in those parts, was probably consecrated by Egyptian superstitions.

gloomy path, which sloped gradually downwards, as if towards the bowels of the earth, and, lifting a stone, deposited her treasure in a hole beneath, which, as the lamp pierced its secrets, seemed already to contain coins of various value, wrung from the credulity or gratitude of her visitors.

"I love to look at you," said she, apostrophizing the moneys, "for when I see you I feel that I am indeed of power. And I am to have twenty years longer life to increase your store! O thou great Hermes!"

She replaced the stone, and continued her path onward for some paces, when she stopped before a deep irregular fissure in the earth. Here as she bent — strange, rumbling, hoarse, and distant sounds might be heard; while ever and anon — with a loud and grating noise, which, to use a homely but faithful simile, seemed to resemble the grinding of steel upon wheels — volumes of steaming and dark smoke issued forth — and rushed spirally along the cavern.

"The shades are noiser than their wont," said the hag, shaking her gray locks; and looking into the cavity, she beheld, far down, glimpses of a long streak of light, intensely but darkly red. "Strange!" she said, shrinking back; "it is only within the last two days that dull, deep light hath been visible — what can it portend?"

The fox, who had attended the steps of his fell mistress, uttered a dismal howl, and ran cowering back to the inner cave — a cold shuddering seized the hag herself at the cry of the animal, which, causeless as it seemed, the superstitions of the time considered deeply ominous. She muttered her placatory charm, and tottered back into her cavern, where, amid her herbs and incantations, she prepared to execute the orders of the Egyptian.

"He called me dotard," said she, as the smoke curled from the hissing caldron — "when the jaws drop — and the grinders fall — and the heart scarce beats — it is a pitiable thing to dote; but when," she added, with a savage and exulting grin — "the young, and the beautiful, and the strong are suddenly smitten into idiocy — ah, *that* is terrible! Burn flame — simmer herb — swelter toad — I cursed him, and he shall be cursed!"

On that night, and at the same hour which witnessed the dark and unholy interview between Arbaces and the saga, — Apæcides was baptized.

CHAPTER X.

EVENTS PROGRESS — THE PLOT THICKENS — THE WEB IS WOVEN, BUT THE NET CHANGES HANDS.

"AND you have the courage then, Julia, to seek the Witch of Vesuvius this evening, in company too with that fearful man?"

"Why, Nydia," replied Julia, timidly, "dost thou really think there is any thing to dread? These old hags, with their enchanted mirrors — their trembling sieves, and their moon-gathered herbs, are, I imagine, but crafty impostors — who have learned, perhaps, nothing but the very charm for which I apply to their skill; and which is drawn but from the knowledge of the field's herbs and simples. Wherefore should I dread?"

"Dost thou not fear thy companion?"

"What, Arbaces? By Dian, I never saw lover more courteous than that same magician! And were he not so dark, he would be even handsome."

Blind as she was, Nydia had the penetration to perceive that Julia's mind was not one that the gallantries of Arbaces were likely to terrify.

She therefore dissuaded her no more ; but nursed, in her excited heart, the wild and increasing desire to know if sorcery had indeed a spell to fascinate love to love.

"Let me go with thee, noble Julia," said she, at length ; "my presence is no protection, but I should like to be beside thee to the last."

"Thine offer pleases me much," replied the daughter of Diomed. "Yet how canst thou contrive it—we may not return until late—they will miss thee."

"Ione is indulgent," replied Nydia. "If thou wilt permit me to sleep beneath thy roof, I will say that thou, an early patroness and friend, hast invited me to pass the day with thee, and sing thee my Thessalian songs ; her courtesy will readily grant to thee so light a boon."

"Nay, ask for thyself!" said the haughty Julia, "I stoop to request no favour from the Neapolitan!"

"Well, be it so ; I will take my leave now ; make my request, which I know will be readily granted, and return shortly."

"Do so ; and thy bed shall be prepared in my own chamber."

Nydia left the fair Pompeian with that.

On her way back to Ione she was met by the chariot of Glaucus, on whose fiery and curveting steeds was riveted the gaze of the crowded street.

He kindly stopped for a moment to speak to the flower-girl.

"Blooming as thine own roses, my gentle Nydia, and how is thy fair mistress ?—recovered, I trust, from the effects of the storm."

"I have not seen her this morning," answered Nydia, "but—"

"But what ? draw back—the horses are too near thee."

"But, think you Ione will permit me to pass the day with Julia, the daughter of Diomed—she wishes it, and was kind to me when I had few friends."

"The gods bless thy grateful heart ! I will answer for Ione's permission."

"Then I may stay over the night and return to-morrow?" said Nydia, shrinking from the praise she so little merited.

"As thou and fair Julia please. Commend me to her ;—and hark ye, Nydia, when thou hearest her speak, note the contrast of her voice with that of the silver-toned Ione.—*Fare.*"

His spirits entirely recovered from the effect of the past night—his locks waving in the wind—his joyous and elastic heart bounding with every spring of his Parthian steeds—a very prototype of his country's god—full of youth and of love—Glaucus was borne rapidly to his mistress.

Enjoy while ye may the present—who can read the future !

As the evening darkened, Julia, reclined within her litter, which was capacious enough also to admit her blind companion, took her way to the rural baths indicated by Arbaces : to her natural levity of disposition, her enterprise brought less of terror than of pleasurable excitement ; above all, she glowed at the thought of her coming triumph over the hated Neapolitan.

A small but gay group was collected round the door of the villa, as her litter passed by it to the private entrance of the baths apportioned to the women.

"Methinks, by this dim light," said one of the bystanders, "I recognise the slaves of Diomed."

"True, Clodius," said Sallust, "it is probably the litter of his daughter Julia. She is rich, my friend ; why dost thou not proffer thy suit to her ?"

"Why, I had once hoped that Glaucus would have married her. She does not disguise her attachment ; and then, as he gambles freely and with ill success—"

"The sesterces would have passed to thee, wise Clodius ; a wife is a good thing — when it belongs to another man !"

"But," continued Clodius, "as Glaucus is, I understand, to wed the Neapolitan, I think I must even try my chance with the rejected maid. After all, the lamp of Hymen will be gilt, and the vessel will reconcile one to the odour of the flame. I shall only protest, my Sallust, against Diomed's making *thee* trustee to his daughter's fortune."*

"Ha ! ha ! let us within, my *commissator* ; the wine and the garlands wait us."

Dismissing her slaves to that part of the house set apart for their entertainment, Julia entered the baths with Nydia, and declining the offers of the attendants, passed by a private door into the garden behind.

"She comes by appointment, be sure," said one of the slaves.

"What is that to thee ?" said a superintendent, sourly ; "she pays for the baths, and does not waste the saffron. Such appointments are the best part of the trade. Hark ? do you not hear the widow Fulvia clapping her hands ! run, fool — run !"

Julia and Nydia, avoiding the more public part of the garden — arrived at the place specified by the Egyptian. In a small circular plot of grass — the stars gleamed upon the statue of Silenus : — the merry god reclined upon a fragment of rock — the lynx of Bacchus at his feet — and over his mouth he held with extended arm a bunch of grapes — which he seemingly laughed to welcome, ere he devoured.

"I see not the magician," said Julia, looking round — when, as she spoke, the Egyptian slowly emerged from the neighbouring foliage, and the light fell palely over his sweeping robes.

"*Salve*, sweet maiden ! but ha ! whom hast thou here ? we must have no companions !"

"It is but the blind flower-girl, wise magician," replied Julia, "herself a Thessalian."

"Oh ! Nydia !" said the Egyptian, "I know her well."

Nydia drew back and shuddered.

"Thou hast been at my house, methinks !" said he, approaching his voice to Nydia's ear ; "thou knowest the oath ! — silence and secrecy, now as then, or beware !"

"Yet," he added, musingly to himself, "why confide more than is necessary, even in the blind ? — Julia, canst thou trust thyself alone with me ? Believe me, the magician is less formidable than he seems."

As he spoke, he gently drew Julia aside.

"The witch loves not many visitors at once," said he ; "leave Nydia here till your return ; she can be of no assistance to us : and, for protection — your own beauty suffices — your own beauty and your own rank — yes, Julia, I know thy name and birth. Come ! trust thyself with me, fair rival of the youngest of the Naiads !"

The vain Julia was not, as we have seen, easily affrighted ; she was moved by the flattery of Arbaces, and she readily consented to suffer Nydia to await her return ; nor did Nydia press her presence. At the sound of the Egyptian's voice, all her terror of him seemed to return ; she felt a sentiment of pleasure at learning she was not to travel in his companionship.

She returned to the house, and in one of the private chambers waited their return. Many and bitter were the thoughts of this wild girl as she sat there in her eternal darkness. She thought of her own desolate fate, far

* It was an ancient Roman law, that no one should make a woman his heir. This law was evaded by the parent's assigning his fortune to a friend in trust for his daughter ; but the trustee might keep it if he liked. The law had, however, fallen into disuse before the date of this story.

from her native land, far from the bland cares that once assuaged the April sorrows of childhood; deprived of the light of day, with none but strangers to guide her steps — accursed by the one soft feeling of her heart — loving and without hope, save the dim and unholy ray which shot across her mind as her Thessalian fancies questioned of the force of spells and the gifts of magic!

Nature had sown in the heart of this poor girl the seeds of virtue never destined to ripen. The lessons of adversity are not always salutary — sometimes they soften and amend, but as often they indurate and pervert. If we consider ourselves more harshly treated by fate than those around us, and do not acknowledge in our own deeds the equity of the severity, we become too apt to deem the world our enemy, to cast ourselves in defiance, to wrestle against our *softer self*, and to indulge the darker passions which are so easily fermented by the sense of injustice. Sold early into slavery — sentenced to a sordid task-master — exchanging her situation, only yet more to imbitter her lot, the kindlier feelings, — naturally profuse in the breast of Nydia, were nipped and blighted. Her sense of right and wrong was confused by a passion to which she had so madly surrendered herself; and the same intense and tragic emotions which we read of in the women of the classic age — a Myrrha — a Medea — which hurried and swept away the whole soul when once delivered to love — ruled, and rioted in, her breast.

Time passed; a light step entered the chamber where Nydia yet indulged her gloomy meditations.

"O thanked be the immortal gods!" said Julia, "I have returned, I have left that terrible cavern: come, Nydia! let us away forthwith!"

It was not till they were seated in the litter, that Julia again spoke.

"Oh!" said she, tremblingly, "such a scene! such fearful incantations! and the dead face of the hag! but, let us talk not of it! I have obtained the potion — she pledges its effect. My rival shall be suddenly indifferent to his eye; and I, I alone, the idol of Glaucus!"

"Glaucus!" exclaimed Nydia.

"Ay! I told thee, girl, at first, that it was *not* the Athenian whom I loved — but I see now that I may trust thee wholly — it *is* the beautiful Greek!"

What then were Nydia's emotions! she had connived, she had assisted in tearing Glaucus from Ione; but only to transfer, by all the power of magic, his affections yet more hopelessly to another. Her heart swelled almost to suffocation — she gasped for breath — in the darkness of the vehicle, Julia did not perceive the agitation of her companion; she went on rapidly dilating on the promised effect of her acquisition, and on her approaching triumph over Ione, every now and then abruptly digressing to the horror of the scene she had quitted — the unmoved mien of Arbaces, and his authority over the dreadful saga.

Meanwhile, Nydia recovered her self-possession; a thought flashed across her; she slept in the chamber of Julia — she might possess herself of the potion.

They arrived at the house of Diomed, and descended to Julia's apartment, where the night's repast awaited them.

"Drink, Nydia, thou must be cold; the air was chill to-night; as for me my veins are yet ice."

And Julia unhesitatingly quaffed deep draughts of the spiced wine.

"Thou hast the potion," said Nydia; "let me hold it in my hands — how small the vial is! of what colour is the draught?"

"Clear as crystal," replied Julia, as she retook the filter; "thou couldst not tell it from this water. The witch assures me it is tasteless. Small

though the vial, it suffices for a life's fidelity: it is to be poured into any liquid: and Glaucus will only know what he has quaffed by the effect."

"Exactly like this water in appearance?"

"Yes, sparkling and colourless as this. How bright it seems! it is as the very essence of moonlit dews. Bright thing! how thou shinest on my hopes through thy crystal vase!"

"And how is it sealed?"

"But by one little stopper—withdraw it now—the draught gives no odour. Strange, that that which speaks to neither sense, should thus command all!"

"Is the effect instantaneous?"

"Usually—but sometimes it remains dormant for a few hours."

"O how sweet this perfume!" said Nydia, suddenly as she took up a small bottle on the table, and bent over its fragrant contents.

"Thinkest thou so? the bottle is set with gems of some value—thou wouldst not have the bracelet yester morn—wilt thou take the bottle?"

"It ought to be such perfumes as these that should remind one who cannot see of the generous Julia.—If the bottle be not too costly—"

"Oh! I have a thousand costlier ones; take it, child!"

Nydia bowed her gratitude, and placed the bottle in her vest.

"And the draught would be equally efficacious whoever administers it?"

"If the most hideous hag beneath the sun bestowed it, such is its asserted virtue, that Glaucus would deem her beautiful, and none but her!"

Julia, warmed by wine and the reaction of her spirits, was now all animation and delight; she laughed loud, and talked on a hundred matters—nor was it till the night had advanced far towards morning that she summoned her slaves and undressed.

When they were dismissed, she said to Nydia—

"I will not suffer this holy draught to quit my presence till the hour comes for its use. Lie under my pillow, bright spirit, and give me happy dreams!"

So saying, she placed the potion under her pillow.—Nydia's heart beat violently.

"Why dost thou drink that unmixed water, Nydia? take the wine by its side."

"I am fevered," replied the blind girl, "and the water cools me—I will place this bottle by my bedside, it refreshes in these summer nights, when the dews of sleep fall not on our lips. Fair Julia, I must leave thee very early—so Ione bids—perhaps before thou art awake: accept, therefore, now, my congratulations."

"Thanks—when next we meet, you may find Glaucus at my feet."

They had retired to their couches, and Julia, worn out by the excitement of the day, soon slept; but anxious and burning thoughts rolled over the mind of the wakeful Thessalian. She listened to the calm breathing of Julia, and her ear, accustomed to the finest shades of sound, speedily assured her of the deep slumber of her companion.

"Now, befriend me, Venus!" said she, softly.

She rose gently, and poured the perfume from the gift of Julia upon the marble floor—she rinsed it several times carefully with the water that was beside her, and then easily finding the bed of Julia (for night to her was as day), she pressed her trembling hand under the pillow and seized the potion. Julia stirred not, her breath regularly fanned the burning cheek of the blind girl. Nydia then opening the vial, poured its contents into the bottle, which easily contained them; and then, refilling the former reservoir of the potion with that limpid water which Julia had assured her it so resembled, she once more placed the vial in its former place. She then stole again to her couch, and waited, with what thoughts! the dawning day.

The sun had risen — Julia slept still — Nydia noiselessly dressed herself, placed her treasure carefully in her vest, took up her staff, and hastened to quit the house.

The porter, Medon, saluted her kindly as she descended the steps that led to the street; she heard him not, her mind was confused and lost in the whirl of tumultuous thought, — each thought a passion. She felt the pure morning air upon her cheek, but it cooled not her scorching veins.

"Glaucus," she murmured, "all the love charms of the wildest magic could not make thee love me as I love thee — lone! — ah, away hesitation! away remorse! Glaucus, my fate is in thy smile, and thine! O hope! O joy! O transport! — *thy* fate is in these hands!"

BOOK IV.

"*Philtra nocent animis, vimque furoris habent.*"—OVID.

CHAPTER I.

REFLECTIONS ON THE ZEAL OF THE EARLY CHRISTIANS—TWO MEN COME TO A PERILOUS RESOLVE—WALLS HAVE EARS—PARTICULARLY SACRED WALLS!

WHOEVER regards the early history of Christianity, will perceive how necessary to its triumph was that fierce spirit of zeal, which, fearing no danger, accepting no compromise, inspired its champions and sustained its martyrs. In a dominant church the genius of intolerance *betrays* its cause; —in a weak and a persecuted church the same genius mainly *supports*. It was necessary to scorn—to loathe—to abhor the creeds of other men, in order to conquer the temptations which they presented—it was necessary rigidly to believe not only that the gospel was the true faith, but the *sole* true faith that saved, in order to nerve the disciple to the austerity of its doctrine, and to encourage him to the sacred and perilous chivalry of converting the polytheist and the heathen. The sectarian sternness which confined virtue and heaven to a chosen few, which saw demons in other gods, and the penalties of hell in another religion—made the believer naturally anxious to convert all to whom he felt the ties of human affection; and the circle thus traced by benevolence to man, was yet more widened by a desire for the glory of God. It was for the honour of the Christian faith that the Christian boldly forced his tenets upon the skepticism of some, the repugnance of others, the sage contempt of the philosopher, the pious shudder of the people;—his very intolerance supplied him with his fittest instruments of success; and the soft heathen began at last to imagine there must indeed be something holy in a zeal wholly foreign to his experience, which stopped at no obstacle, dreaded no danger, and even at the torture or on the scaffold, referred a dispute far other than the calm differences of speculative philosophy, to the tribunal of an Eternal Judge. It was thus that the same fervour which made the Christian of the middle age a bigot without mercy, made the Christian of the early days a hero without fear.

Of these more fiery, daring, and earnest natures, not the least ardent

was Olinthus. No sooner had Apæcides been received by the rites of baptism into the bosom of the church, than the Nazarene hastened to make him conscious of the impossibility to retain the office and robes of priesthood. He could not, it was evident, profess to worship God, and continue even outwardly to honour the idolatrous altars of the fiend.

Nor was this all; the sanguine and impetuous mind of Olinthus beheld in the power of Apæcides, the means of divulging to the deluded people the juggling mysteries of the oracular Isis. He thought Heaven had sent this instrument of its design in order to disabuse the eyes of the crowd, and prepare the way, perchance, for the conversion of a whole city. He did not hesitate then to appeal to all the new-kindled enthusiasm of Apæcides, to arouse his courage and to stimulate his zeal. They met according to previous agreement, the evening after the baptism of Apæcides, in the grove of Cybele, which we have before described.

"At the next solemn consultation of the oracle," said Olinthus, as he proceeded in the warmth of his address, "advance yourself to the railing, proclaim aloud to the people the deception they endure—invite them to enter, to be themselves the witness of the gross but artful mechanism of imposture thou hast described to me. Fear not—the Lord who protected Daniel shall protect thee; we, the community of Christians, will be among the crowd; we will urge on the shrinking, and in the first flush of the popular indignation and shame, I myself, upon those very altars, will plant the palm branch typical of the gospel—and to my tongue shall descend the rushing Spirit of the living God."

Heated and excited as he was, this suggestion was not displeasing to Apæcides. He was rejoiced at so early an opportunity of distinguishing his faith in his new sect, and to his holier feelings were added those of a vindictive loathing at the imposition he had himself suffered, and a desire to avenge it. In that sanguine and elastic *overbourn* of obstacles, (a necessary blindness to all who undertake venturous and lofty actions,) neither Olinthus nor the proselyte perceived all the difficulties to the success of their scheme, which might be found in the reverent superstition of the people themselves, who would probably be loath, before the sacred altars of the great Egyptian goddess, to believe even the testimony of her priest against her power.

Apæcides then assented to this proposal with a readiness which delighted Olinthus. They parted with the understanding that Olinthus should confer with the more important of his Christian brethren on this great enterprise, should receive their advice and the assurances of their support on the eventful day. It so chanced that one of the festivals of Isis was to be held on the second day after this conference. The festival proffered a ready occasion for the design. They appointed to meet once more on the next evening at the same spot. And in that meeting was finally to be settled the order and details of the disclosure for the following day.

It happened that the latter part of this conference had been held near the Sacellum, or small chapel, which I have described in the earlier part of this work, and so soon as the forms of the Christian and the priest had disappeared from the grove, a dark and ungainly figure emerged from behind the chapel.

"I have tracked you with some effect, my brother flamen," said the eavesdropper, "you, the priest of Isis, have not for mere idle discussion conferred with this gloomy Christian. Alas! that I could not hear all your precious plot: Enough! I find, at least, that you meditate revealing the sacred mysteries, and that to-morrow you meet again at this place, to plan the how and the when. May Osiris sharpen my ears then, to detect the whole of your unheard-of audacity. When I have learned more, I must confer at once with Arbaces. We will frustrate you, my friends, deep as

you think yourselves. At present, my breast is a locked treasury of your secret."

So saying, Calenus, for it was he, wrapped his robe round him, and strode thoughtfully homeward.

CHAPTER II.

A CLASSIC HOST, COOK, AND KITCHEN — APÆCIDES SEEKS IONE — THEIR CONVERSATION.

It was then the day for Diomed's banquet to the most select of his friends. The graceful Glaucus, the beautiful Ione, the official Pansa, the high-born Clodius, the immortal Fulvius, the exquisite Lepidus, the epicure Sallust, were not the only honourers of his festival. He expected also an invalid senator from Rome, (a man of considerable repute and favour at court,) and a great warrior from Herculaneum, who had fought with Titus against the Jews, and having enriched himself prodigiously in the wars, was always told by his friends that his country was eternally indebted to his disinterested exertions! The party, however, extended to a yet greater number: for, although, critically speaking, it was at one time thought inelegant among the Romans to entertain less than three or more than nine at their banquets, yet this rule was easily disregarded by the ostentatious. And we are told, indeed, in history, that one of the most splendid of these entertainers usually feasted a select party of three hundred. Diomed, however, more modest, contented himself with doubling the number of the muses. His party consisted of eighteen, no unfashionable number in the present day. "The more the merrier," says the proverb — for my part, at a dinner I have always found it exactly the reverse!

It was the morning of Diomed's banquet, and Diomed himself, though he greatly affected the gentleman and the scholar, retained enough of his mercantile experience to know that a master's eyes make a ready servant. Accordingly, with his tunic ungirdled on his portly stomach, his easy slippers on his feet, and a small wand in his hand, whereby he now directed the gaze, and now corrected the back, of some duller menial, he went from chamber to chamber of his costly villa.

He did not disdain even a visit to that sacred apartment, in which the priests of the festival prepare their offerings. On entering the kitchen, his ears were agreeably stunned by the noise of dishes and pans, of oaths and commands. Small as this indispensable chamber seems to have been in all the houses of Pompeii, it was nevertheless usually fitted up with all that amazing variety of stoves and shapes, stewpans and saucepans, cutters and moulds, without which a cook of spirit, no matter whether he be an ancient or a modern, declares it utterly impossible that he can give you any thing to eat. And as fuel was then, as now, dear and scarce in those regions, great seems to have been the dexterity exercised in preparing as many things as possible with as little fire. An admirable contrivance of this nature may be still seen in the Neapolitan Museum, viz. a portable kitchen, about the size of a folio volume, containing stoves for four *plats*, and an apparatus for heating water or other beverages. It would be an excellent appendage to our modern cheap libraries, containing as much food for the body as they do for the mind — with this difference, you would satisfactorily recur to the first work much more frequently than you would to the *ast*.

Across the small kitchen flitted many forms which the quick eye of the master did not recognise.

"Oh! oh!" grumbled he to himself, "that cursed Congrio hath invited a whole legion of cooks to assist him. They won't serve for nothing, and this is another item in the total of my day's expenses. By Bacchus! thrice lucky shall I be if the slaves do not help themselves to some of the drinking vessels — ready, alas! are their hands, capacious are their tunics — *me miserum!*"

The cooks, however, worked on, seemingly heedless of the apparition of Diomed.

"Ho, Euclio, your egg pan! What, is this the largest? it only holds thirty-three eggs: in the houses I usually serve, the smallest egg pan holds fifty, if need be!"

"The unconscionable rogue," thought Diomed, "he talks of eggs as if they were a sesterce a hundred!"

"By Mercury," cried a pert little culinary disciple, scarce in his novitiate, "who ever saw such antique sweetmeat shapes as these! — it is impossible to do credit to one's art with such rude materials. Why Sallust's commonest sweetmeat shape represents the whole siege of Troy; Hector, and Paris, and Helen, — with little Astyanax and the Wooden Horse into the bargain!"

"Silence, fool!" said Congrio, the cook of the house, who seemed to leave the chief part of the battle to his allies; "my master, Diomed — is not one of those expensive good-for-naughts, who must have the last fashion, cost what it will."

"Thou liest, base slave!" cried Diomed, in a great passion, "and thou costest me already enough to have ruined Lucullus himself — come out of thy den, I want to talk to thee."

The slave, with a sly wink at his confederates, obeyed the command.

"Man of three letters,"* said Diomed, with a face of solemn anger, "how didst thou dare to invite all those rascals into my house? — I see thief written in every line of their faces."

"Yet I assure you, master, that they are men of most respectable character — the best cooks of the place — it is a great favour to get them: — but for my sake —"

"Thy sake! unhappy Congrio," interrupted Diomed; "and by what purloined moneys of mine — by what reserved filchings from marketing — by what goodly meats converted into grease, and sold in the suburbs — by what false charges for bronzes marred, and earthenware broken — hast thou been enabled to make them serve thee for thy sake?"

"Nay, master, do not impeach my honesty. — May the gods desert me if —"

"Swear not!" again interrupted the choleric Diomed, "for then the gods will smite thee for a perjurer, and I shall lose my cook on the eve of dinner. But enough of this at present — keep a sharp eye on thy ill-favoured assistants — and tell me no tales to-morrow of vases broken and cups miraculously vanished, or thy whole back shall be one pain — and hark thee! thou hast made me pay for those Phrygian *attagens* † — enough, per Hercle, to have feasted a sober man for a year together — see that they be not one iota overroasted. The last time, O Congrio, that I gave a banquet to my friends, when thy vanity didst so boldly undertake the becoming appearance of a Melian crane — thou knowest it came up like a stone from *Ætna* — as if all the fires of *Phlegethon* had been scorching out its juices. Be

* The common witty oburgation, from the trilateral word "fur" (thief).

† The *attagen* of Phrygia or Ionia (the bird thus *anglicised* in the plural) was held in peculiar esteem by the Romans — "*Attagen carnis suavisaima*" — (Athen. lib. ix. cap. 8 & 9.) It was a little bigger than a partridge.

modest this time, Congrio — wary and modest. Modesty is the nurse of great actions; and in all other things, as in this, if thou wilt not spare thy master's purse, at least consult thy master's glory."

"There shall not be such a cæna seen at Pompeii since the days of Hercules."

"Softly — softly — thy cursed boasting again. But, I say, Congrio, you *hominunculus* — you pigmy assailant of my cranes — yon pert-tongued neophyte of the kitchen — was there aught but insolence on his tongue when he maligned the comeliness of my sweetmeat shapes? I would not be out of the fashion, Congrio."

"It is but the custom of us cooks," replied Congrio, gravely, "to undervalue our tools in order to increase the effect of our art. The sweetmeat shape is a fair shape, and a lovely; but I would recommend my master, at the first occasion, to purchase some new ones of a—"

"That will suffice," exclaimed Diomed, who seemed resolved never to allow his slave to finish his sentences, "now resume thy charge — shine — eclipse thyself — let men envy Diomed his cook — let the slaves of Pompeii style thee Congrio the Great? Go — yet stay — thou hast not spent all the moneys I gave thee for the marketing."

"*All!*" — alas! the nightingales' tongues, and the Roman *tomacula*,* and the oysters from Britain, and sundry other things, too numerous now to recite, are yet left unpaid for: but what matter — every one trusts the *Archimagirus*† of Diomed the wealthy!"

"O! unconscionable prodigal — what waste! — what profusion! — I am ruined — but go, hasten — inspect! — taste! — perform! — surpass thyself! Let the Roman senator not despise the poor Pompeian. Away, slave! — and remember the Phrygian attagens."

The chief disappeared within his natural domain, and Diomed rolled back his portly presence to the more courtly chambers. All was to his liking — the flowers were fresh — the fountains played briskly — the Mosaic pavements were smooth as mirrors.

"Where is my daughter Julia?" he asked.

"At the bath."

"Ah! that reminds me — time wanes — and I must bathe also."

Our story returns to Apæcides. On awaking that day from the broken and feverish sleep which had followed his adoption of a faith so strikingly and sternly at variance with that in which his youth had been nurtured, the young priest could scarcely imagine that he was not yet in a dream; he had crossed the fatal river — the past was henceforth to have no sympathy with the future; the two worlds were distinct and separate, — that which had been, from that which was to be. To what a bold and adventurous enterprise he had pledged his life — to unveil the mysteries in which he had participated — to desecrate the altars he had served — to denounce the goddess whose ministering robe he wore! Slowly he became sensible of the hatred and the horror he should provoke among the pious even if successful; if frustrated in his daring attempt, what penalties might he not incur for an offence hitherto unheard of — for which no specific law, derived from experience, was prepared, and which, for that very reason, precedents, dragged from the sharpest armory of obsolete and inapplicable legislation, would probably be distorted to meet! His friends, — the sister of his youth, — could he expect justice, though he might receive compassion, from them? — this brave and heroic act would by their heathen eyes be regarded, perhaps, as a heinous apostacy — at the best, as a pitiable madness.

* " — candiduli divina tomacula Porci." — Juvenal x. l. 353. A rich and delicate species of sausage.

† Archimagirus was the lofty title of the chief cook.

He dared — he renounced — every thing in this world — in the hope of securing that eternity in the next which had so suddenly been revealed to him. While these thoughts on the one hand invaded his breast, on the other hand his pride, his courage, and his virtue, mingled with reminiscences of revenge for deceit, of indignant disgust at fraud, conspired to raise and to support him.

The conflict was sharp and keen ; but his new feelings triumphed over his old : and a mighty argument in favour of wrestling with the sanctities of old opinions and hereditary forms, might be found in the conquest over both, achieved by that humble priest. Had the early Christians been more controlled by “ the solemn plausibilities of custom ” — less of democrats in the pure and lofty acceptance of that perverted word, — Christianity would have perished in its cradle !

As each priest in succession slept several nights together in the chambers of the temple, the term imposed on Apæcides was not yet completed ; and when he had risen from his couch, attired himself, as usual, in his robes, and left his narrow chamber, he found himself before the altars of the temple.

In the exhaustion of his late emotions, he had slept far into the morning, and the vertical sun already poured its fervid beams over the sacred place.

“ Salve, Apæcides ! ” said a voice, whose natural asperity was smoothed by long artifice into an almost displeasing softness of tone. “ Thou art late abroad ; has the goddess revealed herself to thee in visions ? ”

“ Could she reveal her true self to the people, Calenus, how incenseless would be these altars ! ”

“ That ! ” replied Calenus, “ may possibly be true, but the deity is wise enough to hold commune with none but priests.”

“ A time may come when she will be unveiled without her own acquiescence.”

“ It is not likely ; she has triumphed for countless ages. And that which has so long stood the test of time rarely succumbs to the lust of novelty. But hark ye, young brother ! these sayings are indiscreet.”

“ It is not for thee to silence them,” replied Apæcides, haughtily.

“ So hot ! — yet I will not quarrel with thee. Why, my Apæcides, has not the Egyptian convinced thee of the necessity of our dwelling together in unity ? Has he not convinced thee of the wisdom of deluding the people and enjoying ourselves ? if not, oh ! brother, he is not that great magician he is esteemed.”

“ Thou then hast shared his lessons,” said Apæcides, with a hollow smile.

“ Ay ! but I stood less in need of them than thou. Nature had already gifted me with the love of pleasure, and the desire of gain and power. Long is the way that leads the voluptuary to the severities of life ; but it is only one step from pleasant sin to sheltering hypocrisy. Beware the vengeance of the goddess, if the shortness of that step be disclosed ! ”

“ Beware thou the hour when the tomb shall be rent and the rottenness exposed ! ” returned Apæcides, solemnly. “ Vale.”

With these words he left the flamen to his meditations. When he got a few paces from the temple, he turned to look back. Calenus had already disappeared in the entry room of the priests, for it now approached the hour of that repast which, called *prandium* by the ancients, answers in point of date to the breakfast of the moderns. The white and graceful fane gleamed brightly in the sun. Upon the altars before it rose the incense and bloomed the garlands. The priest gazed long and wistfully upon the scene — it was the last time that it was ever beheld by him !

He then turned and pursued his way slowly towards the house of Ione —

for before, possibly, the last tie that united them was cut in twain — before the uncertain peril of the next day was incurred, he was anxious to see his last surviving relative, his fondest, as his earliest friend.

He arrived at her house, and found her in the garden with Nydia.

"This is kind, Apæcides," said Ione, joyfully; "and how eagerly have I wished to see thee! — what thanks do I not owe thee! How churlish hast thou been to answer none of my letters — to abstain from coming hither to receive the expressions of my gratitude! Oh, thou hast assisted to preserve thy sister from dishonour. What! what can she say to thank thee, now thou art come at last?"

"My sweet Ione, thou owest me no gratitude, for thy cause was mine; let us avoid that subject, let us recur not to that impious man — how hateful to both of us! I may have a speedy opportunity to teach the world the nature of his pretended wisdom and hypocritical severity. But let us sit down, my sister; I am wearied with the heat of the sun; let us sit in yonder shade, and, for a little while longer, be to each other what we have been."

Beneath a wide plane-tree, with the cistus and the arbutus clustering round them, the living fountain before, the green sward beneath their feet, the gay cicada, once so dear to Athens, rising merrily ever and anon amid the grass; the butterfly, beautiful emblem of the soul, dedicated to Psyche, and which has continued to furnish illustrations to the Christian bard, rich in the glowing colours caught from Sicilian skies,* hovering above the sunny flowers, itself like a winged flower — in this spot, and this scene, the brother and the sister sat together for the last time on earth. You may tread now on the same place; but the garden is no more, the columns are shattered, the fountain has ceased to play. Let the traveller search among the ruins of Pompeii for the house of Ione. Its remains are yet visible; but I will not betray them to the gaze of common-place tourists. He who is more sensitive than the herd will discover them easily; when he has done so let him keep the secret.

They sat down, and Nydia, glad to be alone, retired to the farther end of the garden.

"Ione, my sister," said the young convert, "place your hand upon my brow; let me feel your cool touch. Speak to me too, for your gentle voice is like a breeze that hath freshness as well as music. Speak to me, but *forbear to bless me!* Utter not one word of those forms of speech which our childhood was taught to consider sacred!"

"Alas! and what then shall I say? our language of affection is so woven with that of worship, that the words grow chilled and trite if I banish from them allusion to our gods."

"*Our gods!*" murmured Apæcides, with a shudder: "thou slightest my request already."

"Shall I speak then only to thee of Isis?"

"The Evil Spirit! No; rather be dumb for ever, unless at least thou canst — but away — away this talk! Not now will we dispute and cavil: not now will we judge harshly of each other. Thou, regarding me as an apostate! and I all sorrow and shame for thee, as an idolater. No, my sister, let us avoid such topics and such thoughts. In thy sweet presence a calm falls over my spirit. For a little while I forget. As I thus lay my temples on thy bosom, as I thus feel thy gentle arm embrace me, I think that we are children once more, and that the heaven smiles equally upon both. For oh! if hereafter I escape, no matter what ordeal! and it be permitted me to address thee on one sacred and awful subject; should I find thine ear closed and thy heart hardened, what hope for myself could countervail the despair for thee? In thee, my sister, I behold a likeness, made beautiful,

* In Sicily are found, perhaps, the most beautiful varieties of the butterfly.

made noble, of myself. Shall the mirror live for ever, and the form itself be broken as the potter's clay? Ah, no — no — thou wilt listen to me yet! Dost thou remember how we went into the fields by Baiæ, hand in hand together, to pluck the flowers of spring? even so, hand in hand, shall we enter the Eternal Garden, and crown ourselves with imperishable asphodel!"

Wondering and bewildered by words she could not comprehend, but excited even to tears by the plaintiveness of their tone, Ione listened to these outpourings of a full and oppressed heart. In truth, Apæcides himself was softened much beyond his ordinary mood, which to outward seeming was usually either sullen or impetuous. For the noblest desires are of a jealous nature — they engross, they absorb the soul, and often leave the splenetic humours stagnant and unheeded at the surface. Unheeding the petty things around us, we are deemed morose; — impatient at earthly interruption to the diviner dreams, we are thought irritable and churlish. For as there is no chimera vainer than the hope that one human heart shall find sympathy in another, so none ever interpret us with justice, and none, no, not our nearest and our dearest ties, forbear with us in mercy! When we are dead, and repentance comes too late, both friend and foe may wonder to think how little there was in us to forgive!

"I will talk to thee then of our early years," said Ione. "Shall yon blind girl sing to thee of the days of childhood? her voice is sweet and musical, and she hath a song on that theme which contains none of those allusions it pains thee to hear."

"Dost thou remember the words, my sister?" asked Apæcides.

"Methinks yes; for the tune, which is simple, fixed them on my memory."

"Sing to me then thyself. My ear is not in unison with unfamiliar voices; and thine, Ione, full of household associations, has ever been to me more sweet than all the hireling melodies of Lycia or of Crete. Sing to me!"

Ione beckoned to a slave that stood in the portico, and sending for her lute, sang, when it arrived, to a tender and simple air, the following verses: —

A REGRET FOR CHILDHOOD.

1.

It is not that our earlier Heaven
Escapes its April showers,
Or that to Childhood's heart is given
No snake amid the flowers.
 Ah! twined with grief
 Each brightest leaf
That's wreath'd us by the Hours!
Young though we be, the Past may sting,
The Present feed its sorrow;
But Hope shines bright on every thing
That waits us with the morrow:
 Like sunlit glades,
 The dimmest shades,
Some rosy beam can borrow.

2.

It is not that our later years
Of cares are woven wholly,
But smiles less swiftly chase the tears,
And wounds are healed more slowly
 And Memory's vow
 To lost ones now,
Makes joys too bright, unholy.

And ever fled the Iris-bow
 That smiled when clouds were o'er us;
 If storms should burst, uncheered we go,
 A dreary waste before us; —
 And, with the toys
 Of childish joys,
 We've broke the staff that bore us

Wisely and delicately had Ione chosen that song, sad though its burden seemed, for when we are deeply mournful, discordant above all others is the voice of mirth; the fittest spell is that borrowed from melancholy itself, for dark thoughts can be softened down, when they cannot be brightened; and so they lose the precise and rigid outline of their truth, and their colours melt into the ideal. As the leech applies as a remedy to the internal sore some outward irritation, which, by a gentler wound, draws away the venom of that which is more deadly, thus, in the rankling festers of the mind, our art is to divert to a milder sadness on the surface the pain that gnaweth at the core. And so with Apæcides yielding to the influence of the silver voice that reminded him of the Past, and told but of half the sorrow born to the Present, he forgot his more immediate and fiery sources of anxious thought. He spent hours in making Ione alternately sing to and converse with him. And when he rose to leave her, it was with a calm and lulled mind.

"Ione," said he, as he pressed her hand, "should you hear my name blackened and maligned, will you credit the aspersion?"

"Never, my brother, never!"

"Dost thou not imagine, according to thy belief, that the evil-doer is punished hereafter and the good rewarded?"

"Can you doubt it?"

"Dost thou think, then, that he who is truly good should sacrifice every selfish interest in his zeal for virtue?"

"He who doth so is the equal of the gods."

"And thou believest, that according to the purity and courage with which he thus acts, shall be his portion of bliss beyond the grave?"

"So are we taught to hope."

"Kiss me, my sister. One question more — Thou art to be wedded to Glaucus; perchance that marriage may separate us more hopelessly — but not of this speak I now — thou art to be married to Glaucus, — dost thou love him? Nay, my sister, answer me by words."

"Yes!" murmured Ione, blushing.

"Dost thou feel that, for his sake, thou couldst renounce pride, brave dishonour, and incur death? I have heard that when women really love, it is to that excess."

"My brother, all this could I do for Glaucus, and feel that it were not a sacrifice. There is no sacrifice to those who love, in what is borne for the one we love."

"Enough! shall woman feel thus for man, and man feel less devotion to his God?"

He spoke no more — his whole countenance seemed instinct and inspired with a divine life — his chest swelled proudly, — his eyes glowed — on his forehead was writ the majesty of a man who can dare be noble! He turned to meet the eyes of Ione — earnest, wistful, fearful; — he kissed her fondly, strained her warmly to his breast, and in a moment more he had left the house.

Long did Ione remain in the same place mute and thoughtful. The maidens again and again came to warn her of the deepening noon, and her engagement to Diomed's banquet. At length, she woke from her re-

very, and prepared — not with the pride of beauty, but listless and melancholy — for the festival: one thought alone reconciled her to the promised visit — she should meet Glaucus — she could confide to him her alarm and uneasiness for her brother.

Love! there is one blessing that distinguishes above all others thy chaste and sacred ties from thy guilty and illicit — the Eros from the Anteros; — to those alone whom we love without a crime, we impart the confidence of all our household and familiar cares. To the erring, love is only passion; there are but the mistress and the lover! For the sinless, the bond embraces the fondness, the sanctity, and the faith of every other connexion! It was not in the mouth of Helen, but Andromache, that Homer put those touching words, so true in sentiment, from the eldest to the latest time;

“And while my Hector still survives, I see
My father, mother, brethren, all — in thee!”

CHAPTER III.

A FASHIONABLE PARTY AND A DINNER A LA MODE IN POMPEII.

MEANWHILE, Sallust and Glaucus were slowly strolling towards the nouse of Diomed. Despite the habits of his life, Sallust was not devoid of many estimable qualities. He would have been an active friend, a useful citizen, in short, an excellent man, if he had not taken it into his head to be a philosopher. Brought up in the schools in which Roman plagiarism worshipped the echo of Grecian wisdom, he had imbued himself with those doctrines by which the later Epicureans corrupted the simple maxims of their great master. He gave himself altogether up to pleasure, and imagined there was no sage like a boon companion. Still, however, he had a considerable degree of learning, wit, and good nature; and the hearty frankness of his very vices seemed like virtue itself beside the utter corruption of Clodius and the prostrate effeminacy of Lepidus; and, therefore, Glaucus liked him the best of his companions; and he, in turn, appreciating the nobler qualities of the Athenian, loved him almost as much as a cold *Muræna* or a bowl of the best *Falernian*.

“This is a vulgar old fellow, this Diomed,” said Sallust, “but he has some good qualities — in his cellar!”

“And some charming ones — in his daughter.”

“True, Glaucus — but you are not much moved by them, methinks. I fancy Clodius is desirous to be your successor.”

“He is welcome. — At the banquet of her beauty, no guest, be sure, is considered a *musca*.”*

“You are severe — but she has, indeed, something of the Corinthian about her — they will be well matched after all! — what good-natured fellows we are to associate with that gambling good-for-naught!”

“Pleasure unites strange varieties,” answered Glaucus. “He amuses me —”

“And flatters — but then he pays himself well! — he powders his praise with gold dust.”

“You often hint that he plays unfairly — think you so really!”

“My dear Glaucus, a Roman noble has his dignity to keep up — dignity is very expensive — Clodius must cheat like a scoundrel in order to live like a gentleman.”

* Unwelcome and uninvited guests were called *muscæ*, or flies.

"Ha ha! — well of late I have renounced the dice. Ah! Sallust — when I am wedded to Ione I trust I may yet redeem a youth of follies. We are both born for better things than those in which we sympathize now — born to render our worship in nobler temples than the style of Epicurus."

"Alas!" returned Sallust, in rather a melancholy tone, "what do we know more than this? — life is short — beyond the grave all is dark. There is no wisdom like that which says 'enjoy.'"

"By Bacchus! I doubt sometimes if we do enjoy the utmost of which life is capable."

"I am a moderate man," returned Sallust, "and do not ask 'the utmost.' We are like malefactors, and intoxicate ourselves with wine and myrrh, as we stand on the brink of death; but if we did not do so, the abyss would look very disagreeable. I own that I was inclined to be gloomy, until I took so heartily to drinking — that is a new life, my Glaucus."

"Yes! — but it brings us next morning to a new death."

"Why, the next morning is unpleasant, I own; but then, if it were not so, one would never be inclined to read — I study betimes — because, by the gods! I am generally unfit for any thing else till noon."

"Fie, Scythian!"

"Pshaw! the fate of Pentheus to him who denies Bacchus."

"Well, Sallust, with all your faults, you are the best profligate I ever met; and verily, if I were in danger of life, you are the only man in all Italy who would stretch out a finger to save me."

"Perhaps I should not, if it were in the middle of supper. But, in truth, we Italians are fearfully selfish."

"So are all men who are not free," said Glaucus, with a sigh — "Freedom alone makes men sacrifice to each other."

"Freedom then must be a very fatiguing thing to an Epicurean," answered Sallust. "But here we are, at our host's."

As Diomed's villa is one of the most considerable in point of size of any yet discovered at Pompeii, and is, moreover, built much according to the specific instructions for a suburban villa, laid down by the Roman architect, it may not be uninteresting briefly to describe the plan of the apartments through which our visitors passed.

They entered then by the same small vestibule at which we have before been presented to the aged Medon, and passed at once into a colonnade, technically termed the peristyle; for the main difference between the suburban villa and the town mansion consisted in placing in the first the said colonnade in exactly the same place as that which in the town mansion was occupied by the atrium. In the centre of the peristyle was an open court, which contained the impluvium.

From this peristyle descended a staircase to the offices; another narrow passage on the opposite side communicated with a garden; various small apartments surrounded the colonnade, appropriated probably to country visitors. Another door to the left, on entering, communicated with a small triangular portico, which belonged to the baths; and behind was the wardrobe, in which were kept the vests of the holiday suits of the slaves, and perhaps of the master. Seventeen centuries afterward were found those relics of ancient finery, calcined and crumbling, kept longer, alas! than their thrifty lord foresaw.

Return we to the peristyle, and endeavour now to present to the reader a coup-d'œil of the whole suite of apartments which immediately stretched before the steps of the visitors.

Let him then first imagine the columns of the portico hung with festoons of flowers; the columns themselves in the lower part painted red, and the walls around glowing with various frescoes; then looking beyond a cur-

tain, three parts drawn aside, the eye caught the tablinum or saloon (which was closed at will by glazed doors, now slid back into the walls). On either side of this tablinum were small rooms, one of which was a kind of cabinet of gems; and these apartments, as well as the tablinums, communicated with a long gallery, which opened at either end upon terraces; and between the terraces, and communicating with the central part of the gallery, was a hall, in which the banquet was that day prepared. All these apartments, though almost on a level with the street, were one story above the garden; and the terraces, communicating with the gallery, were continued into corridors, raised above the pillars which, to the right and left, skirted the garden below.

Beneath, and on a level with the garden, ran the apartments we have already described, as chiefly appropriated to Julia.

In the gallery then just mentioned, Diomed received his guests.

The merchant affected greatly the man of letters, and, therefore, he also affected a passion for every thing Greek; he paid particular attention to Glaucus.

"You will see, my friend," said he, with a wave of his hand, "that I am a little classical here—a little Cecropian—Eh? The hall in which we shall sup is borrowed from the Greeks. It is an *Æcus Cyzicene*. Noble Sallust! they have not, I am told, this sort of apartment in Rome."

"Oh!" replied Sallust, with a half smile, "you Pompeians combine all most eligible in Greece and in Rome; may you, Diomed, combine the viands as well as the architecture!"

"You shall see, you shall see, my Sallust," replied the merchant; "we have a taste at Pompeii,—and we have also money."

"They are two excellent things," replied Sallust. "But behold, the Lady Julia!"

A main difference, as I have before remarked, in the manner of life observed among the Athenians and Romans was, that with the first, the modest women rarely or never took part in entertainments; with the latter, they were the common ornaments of the banquet; but when they were present at the feast, it usually terminated at an early hour.

Magnificently robed in white, interwoven with pearls and threads of gold, the handsome Julia entered the apartment.

Scarcely had she received the salutation of the two guests, ere Pansa and his wife, Lepidus, Clodius, and the Roman senator entered almost simultaneously; then came the widow Fulvia; then the poet Fulvius, like to the widow in name if in nothing else; the warrior from Herculaneum, accompanied by his umbra, next stalked in; afterward, the less eminent of the guests. Ione yet tarried.

It was the mode among the courteous ancients to flatter whenever it was in their power; accordingly it was a sign of ill breeding to seat themselves immediately on entering the house of their host. After performing the salutation, which was usually accomplished by the same cordial shake of the right hand which we ourselves retain, and sometimes by the yet more familiar embrace, they spent several minutes in surveying the apartment, and admiring the bronzes, the pictures, or the furniture, with which it was adorned. A mode very impolite according to our refined English notions, which place good breeding in indifference; we would not for the world express much admiration at a man's house, for fear it should be thought we had never seen any thing so fine before!

"A beautiful statue this, of Bacchus!" said the Roman senator.

"A mere trifle!" replied Diomed.

"What charming paintings!" said Fulvia.

"Mere trifles!" answered the owner.

"Exquisite candelabra!" cried the warrior.

"Exquisite!" echoed his umbra.

"Trifles! trifles!" reiterated the merchant.

Meanwhile Glaucus found himself by one of the windows of the gallery which communicated with the terraces, and the fair Julia by his side.

"Is it an Athenian virtue, Glaucus," said the merchant's daughter, "to shun those whom we once sought?"

"Fair Julia — no!"

"Yet, methinks, it is one of the qualities of Glaucus."

"Glaucus never shuns a *friend*," replied the Greek, with some emphasis on the last word.

"May Julia rank among the number of his friends?"

"It would be an honour to the emperor to find a friend in one so lovely."

"You evade my question," returned the enamoured Julia; "but tell me, is it true that you admire the Neapolitan Ione?"

"Does not beauty constrain our admiration?"

"Ah! subtle Greek, still do you fly the meaning of my words. But say, shall Julia be indeed your friend?"

"If she will so favour me, blessed be the gods! The day in which I am so honoured shall be ever marked in white."

"Yet even while you speak, your eye is restless — your colour comes and goes — you move away involuntarily — you are impatient to join Ione."

For at that moment Ione had entered, and Glaucus had indeed betrayed the emotion noticed by the jealous beauty.

"Can admiration to one woman make me unworthy the friendship of another? Sanction not so, O Julia, the libels of the poets on your sex."

"Well, you are right — or I will learn to think so. Glaucus! yet one moment! you are to wed Ione, is it not so?"

"If the fates permit, such is my blessed hope."

"Accept then from me, in token of our new friendship, a present for your bride. Nay, it is the custom of friends, you know, always to present to bride and bridegroom some such little marks of their esteem and favouring wishes."

"Julia! I cannot refuse any token of friendship from one like you. I will accept the gift as an omen from Fortune herself."

"Then after the feast, when the guests retire, you will descend with me to my apartment, and receive it from my hands. — Remember!" said Julia, as she joined the wife of Pansa, and left Glaucus to seek Ione.

The widow Fulvia and the spouse of the ædile were engaged in high and grave discussion.

"O Fulvia! I assure you that the last account from Rome declares that the frizzling mode of dressing the hair is growing antiquated; they only now wear it built up in a tower like Julia's, or arranged as a helmet — the *Galerian* fashion, like mine, you see; it has a fine effect, I think. I assure you Vespius (Vespius was the name of the Herculean hero) admires it greatly."

"And nobody wears the hair like yon Neapolitan, in the Greek way?"

"What, parted in front with the knot behind! Oh no! how ridiculous it is! it reminds one of a statue of Diana! Yet this Ione is handsome, eh!"

"So the men say, but then she is rich: she is to marry the Athenian; I wish her joy. He will not be long faithful I suspect; those foreigners are very faithless."

"Ho, Julia!" said Fulvia, as the merchant's daughter joined them; "have you seen the tiger yet?"

"No!"

"Why, all the ladies have been to see him. He is so handsome!"

"I hope we shall find some criminal or other for him and the lion," replied Julia; "your husband" (turning to Pansa's wife) "is not so active as he should be in this matter."

"Why, really, the laws are too mild," replied the dame of the helmet; "there are so few offences to which the punishment of the arena can be awarded; and then, too, the gladiators are growing effeminate. The stoutest bestiarii declare they are willing enough to fight a boar or a bull, but as for a lion or tiger, they think the game too much in earnest."

"They are worthy of a mitre,"* replied Julia, in disdain.

"Oh! have you seen the new house of Fulvius, the dear poet?" said Pansa's wife.

"No, is it handsome?"

"Very! such good taste; but they say, my dear, that he has such improper pictures. He wont show them to the women; how ill-bred!"

"Those poets are always odd," said the widow. "But he is an interesting man; what pretty verses he writes: we improve very much in poetry; it is impossible to read the old stuff now."

"I declare I am of your opinion," returned the lady of the helmet, "there is so much more force and energy in the modern school."

The warrior sauntered up to the ladies.

"It reconciles me to peace," said he, "when I see such faces."

"Oh! you heroes are ever flatterers," returned Fulvia, hastening to appropriate the compliment specially to herself.

"By this chain, which I received from the emperor's own hand," replied the warrior, playing with a short chain which hung round the neck like a collar, instead of descending to the breast, according to the fashion of the peaceful—"by this chain you wrong me; I am a blunt man; a soldier should be so."

"How do you find the ladies of Pompeii generally?" said Julia.

"By Venus, most beautiful; they favour me a little, it is true, and that inclines my eyes to double their charms."

"We love a warrior," said the wife of Pansa.

"I see it, by Hercules, it is even disagreeable to be too celebrated in these cities. At Herculaneum they climb the roof of my atrium to catch a glimpse of me through the compluvium: the admiration of one's citizens is pleasant at first, but burdensome afterward."

"True, true, O Vespius!" cried the poet, joining the group, "I find it so myself."

"You?" said the stately warrior, scanning the small form of the poet with ineffable disdain. "In what legion have you served?"

"You may see my spoils, my exuviae, in the Forum itself," returned the poet, with a significant glance at the women; "I have been among the tent companions, the *contubernales* of the great Mantuan himself."

"I know no general from Mantua," said the warrior, gravely; "what campaign have you served?"

"That of Helicon."

"I never heard of it."

"Nay, Vespius, he does but joke," said Julia, laughing.

"Joke! By Mars, am I a man to be joked?"

"Yes; Mars himself was in love with the mother of jokes," said the poet, a little alarmed. "Know then, O Vespius! that I am the poet Fulvius. It is I who make warriors immortal."

* Mitres were worn sometimes by men, and considered a great mark of effeminacy—to be fit for a mitre was therefore to be fit for very little else!—It is astonishing how many modern opinions are derived from antiquity. Doubtless, it was this classical notion of mitres that incited the ardour of Mr. Ripon to expel the bishops. There is a vast deal of wickedness in Latin!

"The gods forbid!" whispered Sallust to Julia. "If Vespian were made immortal, what a specimen of tiresome braggadocio would be transmitted to posterity!"

The soldier looked puzzled, when, to the infinite relief of himself and his companions, the signal for the feast was given.

As we have already witnessed at the house of Glaucus the ordinary routine of a Pompeian entertainment, the reader is spared any second detail of the courses and the manner in which they were introduced.

Diomed, who was rather ceremonious, had appointed a nomenclator or appointer of places to each guest.

The reader understands that the festive board was composed of three tables; one at the centre, and one at each wing. It was only at the outer side of these tables that the guests reclined: the inner space was left untenanted for the greater convenience of the waiters or ministri. The extreme corner of one of the wings was appropriated to Julia as the lady of the feast, that next her to Diomed. At one corner of the centre-table was placed the ædile; at the opposite corner the Roman senator; these were the posts of honour. The other guests were arranged so that the young (gentleman or lady) should sit next each other; and the more advanced in years be similarly matched. An agreeable provision enough, but one which must often have offended those who wished to be thought still young.

The chair of Ione was next to the couch of Glaucus.* The seats were veneered with tortoise-shell, and covered with quilts stuffed with feathers, and ornamented with the costly embroideries of Babylon. The modern ornaments of Epergne or Plateau, were supplied by images of the gods, wrought in bronze, ivory, and silver. The sacred saltcellar and the familiar Lares were not forgotten. Over the table and the seats, a rich canopy was suspended from the ceiling. At each corner of the table were lofty candelabra, for though it was early noon, the room was darkened; while from tripods placed in different parts of the room distilled the odour of myrrh and frankincense; and upon the abacus, or sideboard, large vases and various ornaments of silver were ranged, much with the same ostentation (but with more than the same taste) that we find displayed at a modern feast.

The custom of grace was invariably supplied by that of libations to the gods; and Vesta, as queen of the household gods, usually received first that graceful homage.

This ceremony being performed, the slaves showered flowers upon the couches and the floor, and crowned each guest with rosy garlands intricately woven with ribands, tied by the rind of the linden-tree, and each intermingled with the ivy and the amethyst, supposed preventives against the effect of wine: the wreaths of the women only were exempted from these leaves, for it was not the fashion for them to drink wine — *in public*. It was then that the president Diomed thought it advisable to institute a *basileus* or director of the feast — an important office, sometimes chosen by lot, sometimes, as now, by the master of the entertainment.

Diomed was not a little puzzled as to his election. The invalid senator was too grave and too infirm for the proper fulfilment of his duty; the ædile Pansa was adequate enough to the task; but then to choose the next in official rank to the senator, was an affront to the senator himself. While deliberating between the merits of the others, he caught the mirthful glance of Sallust, and by a sudden inspiration, named the jovial epicure to the rank of director, or Arbiter Bibendi.

Sallust received the appointment with becoming humility.

* In formal parties, the women sat in chairs — the men reclined. It was only in the bosom of families, that the same ease was granted to both sexes — the reason is obvious.

"I shall be a merciful king," said he, "to those who drink deep; to a recusant, Midas himself shall be less inexorable — beware!"

The slaves now handed round basins of perfumed water, by which lavation the feast commenced: and now the table groaned under the initiatory course.

The conversation, at first desultory and scattered, allowed Ione and Glaucus to carry on those sweet whispers which are worth all the eloquence in the world. Julia watched them with flashing eyes.

"How soon shall her place be mine!" thought she.

But Clodius, who sat in the centre table, so as to observe well the countenance of Julia, guessed her pique, and resolved to profit by it. He addressed her across the table in set phrases of gallantry, and as he was of high birth, and of a showy person, the vain Julia was not so much in love as to be insensible to his attentions.

The slaves in the interim were constantly kept upon the alert by the vigilant Sallust, who chased one cup by another with a celerity which seemed as if he were resolved upon exhausting those capacious cellars, which the reader may yet see beneath the house of Diomed. The worthy merchant began to repent his choice, as amphora after amphora was pierced and emptied. The slaves, all under the age of manhood, (the youngest being about ten years old — it was they who filled the wine; the eldest, some five years older, mingled it with water,) seemed to share in the zeal of Sallust; and the face of Diomed began to glow, as he watched the provoking complacency with which they seconded the exertions of the king of the feast.

"Pardon me, O senator," said Sallust, "I see you flinch; your purple hem cannot save you — drink!"

"By the gods!" said the senator, coughing, "my lungs are already on fire; you proceed with so miraculous a swiftness, that Phaeton himself was nothing to you. I am infirm, O pleasant Sallust — you must exonerate me."

"Not I, by Vesta! I am an impartial monarch, — drink!"

The poor senator, compelled by the laws of the table, was forced to comply. Alas! every cup was bringing him nearer and nearer to the Stygian pool.

"Gently! gently! my king," groaned Diomed, "we already begin to —"

"Treason!" interrupted Sallust, "no stern Brutus here! — no interference with royalty!"

"But our female guests!"

"Love a toper! — Did not Ariadne dote upon Bacchus?"

The feast proceeded — the guests grew more talkative and noisy — the dessert, or last course, was already on the table, and the slaves bore round water with myrrh and hyssop for the finishing lavation. At the same time a small circular table that had been placed in the space opposite the guests, suddenly, and as by magic, seemed to open in the centre, and cast up a fragrant shower, sprinkling the table and the guests; while, as it ceased, the awning above them was drawn aside, and the guests perceived that a rope had been stretched across the ceiling, and that one of those nimble dancers, for which Pompeii was so celebrated, and whose descendants add so charming a grace to the festivities of Astley's or Vauxhall, was now treading his airy measures right over their heads.

This apparition, removed but by a cord from one's pericranium, and indulging the most vehement leaps, apparently with the intention of alighting upon that cerebral region, would probably be regarded with some terror by a party in May-fair; but our Pompeian revellers seemed to behold the spectacle with delighted curiosity, and applauded in proportion as the dancer

appeared with the most difficulty to miss falling upon the head of whatever guest he particularly selected to dance above. He paid, indeed, the senator the peculiar compliment of literally falling from the rope, and catching it again with his hand, just as the whole party imagined the skull of the Roman was as much fractured as ever that of the poet, whom the eagle took for a tortoise.

At length, to the great relief of at least Ione, who had not much accustomed herself to this entertainment, the dancer suddenly paused, as a strain of music was heard from without. He danced again still more wildly; the air changed, the dancer paused again; no, it could not dissolve the charm which was supposed to possess him. He represented one who by a strange disorder is compelled to dance, and whom only a certain air of music can cure.* At length the musician seemed to hit on the right tune, the dancer gave one leap, swung himself down from the rope, alighted on the floor, and vanished.

One art now yielded to another, and the musicians who were stationed without on the terrace struck up a soft and mellow air, to which were sung the following words, made almost indistinct by the barrier between, and the exceeding lowness of the minstrelsy:

FESTIVE MUSIC SHOULD BE LOW.

1.

Hark, through these flowers our music sends its greeting
To your loved hall, where Psilas† shuns the day;
When the young god his Cretan nymph was meeting,
He taught Pan's rustic pipe this gliding lay.
Soft as the dews of wine
Shed in this banquet-hour,
The bright libation of Sound's stream divine,
O reverent harp, to Aphrodite pour!

2.

Wild rings the trump o'er ranks to glory marching
Music's sublimer bursts for war are meet;
But sweet lips murmuring under wreaths o'erarching,
Find the low whispers, like their own, most sweet.
Steal my lull'd music, steal,
Like woman's half-heard tone,
So that whoe'er shall hear, shall think to feel
In thee, the voice of lips that love his own.

How it was I know not; but at the end of that song Ione's cheek blushed more deeply than before, and Glaucus had contrived beneath the cover of the table to steal her hand.

"It is a pretty song," said Fulvius, patronisingly.

"Ah! if you would oblige us," murmured the wife of Pansa.

"Do you wish Fulvius to sing?" asked the king of the feast, who had just called on the assembly to drink the health of the Roman senator, a cup to each letter of his name.

"Can you ask?" said the matron, with a complimentary glance at the poet.

Sallust snapped his fingers, and, whispering the slave who came to learn his orders, the latter disappeared, and returned in a few moments with a small harp in one hand and a branch of myrtle in the other.

The slave approached the poet, and with a low reverence presented to him the harp.

* A dance still retained in Campania.

† Bacchus.

"Alas! I cannot play," said the poet.

"Then you must sing to the myrtle. It is a Greek fashion — Diomed loves the Greeks — I love the Greeks — you love the Greeks — we all love the Greeks — and between you and me this is not the only thing we have stolen from them. However, I introduce this custom — I, the king — sing, subject, — sing."

The poet with a bashful smile took the myrtle in his hands, and after a short prelude, sang as follows in a pleasant and well-tuned voice:

THE CORONATION OF THE LOVES.*

1.

The merry Loves one holyday
Were all at gambols madly,
But Loves too long can seldom play
Without behaving sadly.
They laughed, they toyed, they romped about,
And then for change they all fell out.
Fie, fie! how can they quarrel so,
My Lesbia — ah, for shame, love!
Methinks 't is scarce an hour ago
When we did just the same, love.

2.

The Loves, 't is thought, were free till then,
They had no king nor laws, dear,
But gods, like men, should subject be,
Say all the ancient saws, dear.
And so our crew resolved, for quiet,
To choose a king to curb their riot.
A kiss — ah! what a grievous thing
For both, methinks 't would be, child,
If I should take some prudish king,
And cease to be so free, child!

3.

Among their toys a Casque they found,
It was the Helm of Ares;
With horrent plumes the crest was crown'd,
It frightened all the Lares.
So fine a king was never known —
They placed the Helmet on the throne.
My girl, since Valour wins the world,
They chose a mighty master;
But thy sweet flag of smiles unfurl'd,
Would win the world much faster!

4.

The Casque soon found the Loves too wild
A troop for him to school them;
For warriors know how *one* such child
Has, ay, contrived to fool them.
They plagued him so — that in despair
He took a wife the plague to share.
If kings themselves thus find the strife
Of earth unshared, severe, girl;
Why just to halve the ills of life,
Come take your partner here, girl.

* Suggested by two Pompeian pictures in the Museum at Naples, which represent a dove and a helmet enthroned by Cupids.

5.

Within that room the Bird of Love
 The whole affair had eyed then;
 The monarch hailed the royal Dove,
 And placed her by his side then;
 What mirth amid the Loves was seen,
 "Long live," they cried, "our king and queen."
 Ah! Lesbia, would that thrones were mine,
 And crowns to deck that brow, love;
 And yet I know that heart of thine,
 For me is throne enow, love.

6.

The urchins thought a milder mate
 Their king could not have taken;
 But when the queen in judgment sat,
 They found themselves mistaken.
 The art to reign she'd learned above,
 And ne'er was despot like the Dove.
 In thee I find the same deceit,
 Too late, alas! a learner!
 For where a mien more gently sweet?
 And where a tyrant sterner?

This song, which greatly suited the gay and lively fancy of the Pompeians, was received with considerable applause, and the widow insisted on crowning her namesake with the very branch of myrtle to which he had sung. It was easily twisted into a garland, and the immortal Fulvius was crowned amid clapping of hands and shouts of *Io triumphe!* The song and the harp now circulated round the party; a new myrtle branch being handed about, stopping at each person who could be prevailed upon to sing.*

The sun began now to decline, though the revellers, who had worn away several hours, perceived it not in their darkened chamber; and the senator, who was tired, and the warrior who had to return to *Herculaneum*, rising to depart, gave the signal for the general dispersion.

"Tarry yet a moment, my friends," said *Diomed*; "if you will go so soon, you must at least take a share in our concluding game."

So saying, he motioned to one of the ministri, and whispering him, the slave went out, and presently returned with a small bowl containing various tablets carefully sealed and apparently exactly similar. Each guest was to purchase one of these at the nominal price of the lowest piece of silver: and the sport of this lottery (which was the favourite diversion of *Augustus*, who introduced it) consisted in the inequality and sometimes the incongruity of the prizes, the nature and amount of which were specified within the tablets. For instance, the poet, with a wry face, drew one of his own poems, (no physician ever less willingly swallowed his own draught;) the warrior drew a case of bodkins, which gave rise to certain novel witticisms relative to *Hercules* and the distaff; the widow *Fulvia* obtained a large drinking cup; *Julia*, a gentleman's buckle; and *Lepidus*, a ladies' patch-box. The most appropriate lot was drawn by the gambler *Clodius*, who reddened with anger on being presented to a set of cogged dice:—A certain damp was thrown upon the gayety which these various lots created, by an accident that was considered ominous; *Glaucus* drew the most val-

* According to *Plutarch*, (*Sympos. lib. i.*) it seems that the branch of myrtle or laurel was not carried round in order, but passed from the first person on one couch to the first on another, and then from the second on the one to the second on the other, and so on.

vable of all the prizes, a small marble statue of Fortune, of Grecian workmanship; on handing it to him the slave suffered it to drop, and it broke in pieces.

A shiver went round the assembly, and each voice cried spontaneously, "*Dii avertite omen!*"

Glaucus alone, though perhaps as superstitious as the rest, affected to be unmoved.

"Sweet Neapolitan," whispered he tenderly to Ione, who had turned pale as the broken marble itself; "I *accept* the omen. It signifies, that in obtaining thee, Fortune can give no more—she breaks *her* image when she blesses me with *thine*."

In order to divert the impression which this incident had occasioned in an assembly, which, considering the civilization of the guests, would seem miraculously superstitious, if at the present day, in a country party, we did not often see a lady grow hypochondriacal on leaving a room—last of thirteen,—Sallust now crowning his cup with flowers, gave the health of their host. This was followed by a similar compliment to the emperor; and then with a parting cup to Mercury to send them pleasant slumbers, they concluded the entertainment by a last libation, and broke up the party.

Carriages were little used in the streets of Pompeii, partly owing to their extreme narrowness,—partly to the convenient smallness of the city. Most of the guests replacing their sandals, which they put off in the banquet-room, and induing their cloaks, left the house on foot, attended by their slaves.

Meanwhile, having seen Ione depart, Glaucus turning to the staircase which led down to the rooms of Julia, was conducted by a slave to an apartment in which he found the merchant's daughter already seated.

"Glaucus!" said she, looking down, "I see that you really love Ione—she is indeed beautiful."

"Julia is charming enough to be generous," replied the Greek. "Yes, I love Ione; amid all the youth who court you, may you have one worshipper as sincere."

"Pray the gods to grant it!—See, Glaucus, these pearls are the present I destine to your bride: may Juno give her health to wear them!"

So saying she placed a case in his hands, containing a row of pearls of some size and price. It was so much the custom for persons about to be married to receive these gifts, that Glaucus could have little scruple in accepting the necklace, though the gallant and proud Athenian inly resolved to requite the gift by one of thrice its value. Julia then stopping short his thanks, poured forth some wine into a small bowl.

"You have drunk many toasts with my father," said she, smiling,—
"one now with me. Health and fortune to your bride!"

She touched the cup with her lips, and then presented it to Glaucus. The customary etiquette required that Glaucus should drain the whole contents; he accordingly did so. Julia, unknowing the deceit which Nydia had practised upon her, watched him with sparkling eyes: although the witch had told her that the effect *might* not be immediate, she yet sanguinely trusted to an expeditious operation in favour of her charms. She was disappointed when she found Glaucus coldly replace the cup, and converse with her in the same unmoved but gentle tone as before. And though she detained him as long as she decorously could do, no change took place in his manner.

"But to-morrow," thought she, exultingly recovering her disappointment, "to-morrow, alas for Glaucus!"

Alas for him, indeed!

CHAPTER IV.

THE STORY HALTS FOR A MOMENT AT AN EPISODE.

RESTLESS and anxious, Apæcides consumed the day in wandering through the most sequestered walks in the vicinity of the city. The sun was slowly setting as he paused beside a lonely part of the Sarnus, ere yet it wound amid the evidences of luxury and power. Only through openings in the woods and vines were caught glimpses of the white and gleaming city, in which was heard in the distance no din — no sound — nor “busiest hum of men.” Amid the green banks crept the lizard and the grasshopper, and here and there in the brake some solitary bird broke into sudden song, as suddenly stilled. There was a deep calm around, but not the calm of night; the air still breathed of the freshness and life of day; the grass still moved to the stir of the insect horde; and on the opposite bank the graceful and white capella passed browsing through the herbage, and paused at the wave to drink.

As Apæcides stood musingly gazing upon the waters, he heard beside him the low bark of a dog.

“Be still, poor friend,” said a voice at hand; “the stranger’s step harms not thy master.” The convert recognised the voice, and turning, he beheld the mysterious old man whom he had seen in the congregation of the Nazarenes.

The old man was sitting upon a fragment of stone covered with ancient mosses; beside him were his staff and scrip; at his feet lay a small shagged dog, the companion in how many a pilgrimage perilous and strange!

The face of the old man was as balm to the excited spirit of the neophyte: he approached, and craving his blessing, sat down beside him.

“Thou art provided as for a journey, father,” said he; “wilt thou leave us yet?”

“My son,” replied the old man, “the days left to me on earth are few and scanty; I employ them as becomes me, travelling from place to place, comforting those whom God has gathered together in his name, and proclaiming the glory of his Son, as testified to his servant.”

“Thou hast looked, they tell me, on the face of Christ?”

“And the face revived me from the dead: know, young proselyte to the true faith, that I am he of whom thou readest in the scroll of the apostle. In the far Judea and the city of Nain, there dwelt a widow, humble of spirit and sad of heart, for of all the ties of life one son alone was spared to her. And she loved him with a melancholy love, for he was the likeness of the lost. And the son died. The reed on which she leaned was broken, the oil was dried up in the widow’s cruse. They bore the dead upon his bier, and near the gate of the city, when the crowd were gathered, there came a silence over the sounds of woe, for the Son of God was passing by. The mother, who followed the bier, wept not noisily, but all who looked upon her saw that her heart was crushed. And the Lord pitied her, and he touched the bier, and said, ‘I SAY UNTO THEE, ARISE.’ And the dead man woke and looked upon the face of the Lord. Oh! that calm and solemn brow! that unutterable smile — that care-worn and sorrowful face lighted up with a God’s benignity! it chased away the shadows of the grave! I rose, I spoke — I was living and in my mother’s arms, yes — I am the dead revived! The people shouted; the funeral horns rang forth merrily — there was a cry, ‘God has visited his people!’ I heard them not: I felt, I saw nothing but the face of the Redeemer.”

The old man paused, deeply moved ; and the youth felt his blood creep and his hair stir. He was in the presence of one who had known the mystery of death.

"Till that time," renewed the widow's son, "I had been as other men, thoughtless, not abandoned ; taking no heed but of the things of love and life ; nay, I had inclined to the gloomy faith of the earthly Sadducee ! But, raised from the dead, from awful and desert dreams, that these lips never dare reveal — recalled upon earth to testify the powers of Heaven — once more mortal, the witness of immortality ; I drew a new being from the grave. Oh, fated — oh, lost Jerusalem ! Him from whom came my life, I beheld adjudged to the agonized and parching death ! Far in the mighty crowd I saw the light rest and glimmer over the cross ; I heard the hooting mob — I cried aloud — I raved — I threatened ; none heeded me : I was lost in the whirl and the roar of thousands ! But even then in my agony and his own, methought the glazing eye of the Son of man sought me out — His lip smiled, as when it conquered death — it hushed me, and I became calm. He who defied the grave for another, what was the grave to him ! The sun shone aslant the pale and powerful features, and then died away ! Darkness fell over the earth ; how long it endured I know not. A loud cry came through the gloom, a sharp and bitter cry — and all was silent !

"But who shall tell the terrors of the night ? I walked along the city — the earth reeled to and fro, and the houses trembled to their base : the living had deserted the streets, but *not the dead*. Through the gloom I saw them glide — the dim and ghastly shapes, in the cerements of the grave, and with horror, and wo, and warning on their unmoving lips and lightless eyes ! they swept by me as I passed — they glared upon me ; I had been their brother ; and they bowed their heads in recognition : they had risen to tell the living that the dead *can* rise !"

Again the old man paused ; and when he resumed it was in a calmer tone.

"From that night I resigned all earthly thought but that of serving Him. A preacher and a pilgrim, I have traversed the remotest corners of the earth, proclaiming his divinity and bringing new converts to his fold. I come as the wind, and as the wind depart : sowing, as the wind sows, the seeds that enrich the world.

"Son, on earth we shall meet no more. Forget not this hour : what are the pleasures and the pomps of life ? As the lamp shines, life *glitters* for an hour ; but the soul's light is the star that burns for ever in the heart of illimitable space."

It was then that their converse fell upon the general and sublime doctrines of immortality ; it soothed and elevated the young mind of the convert, which yet clung to many of the damps and shadows of that cell of faith which he had so lately left — it was the air of heaven breathing on the prisoner released at last. There was a strong and marked distinction between the Christianity of the old man and that of Olinthus ; that of the first was more soft, more gentle, more divine. The hard heroism of Olinthus had something in it fierce and intolerant — it was necessary to the part he was doomed to play — it had in it more of the courage of the martyr than the charity of the saint. It aroused, it excited, it nerved, rather than subdued and softened. But the whole heart of that divine old man was bathed in love ; the smile of the Deity had burned away from it the leaven of earthlier and coarser passions, and left to the energy of the hero all the meekness of the child.

"And now," said he, rising at length, as the sun's last ray died in the west, "now, in the cool of twilight, I pursue my way towards the imperial Rome. There yet dwell some holy men, who like me have beheld the face of Christ ; and them would I see before I die."

"But the night is chill for thine age, my father, and the way is long, and the robber haunts it : rest thee till to-morrow."

"Kind son, what is there in this scrip to tempt the robber? — and the night and the solitude — *these* make the ladder round which angels cluster, and beneath which my spirit can dream of God. Oh! none can know what the pilgrim feels as he walks on his holy course ; nursing no fear, and foreseeing no danger — for God is with him! He hears the winds murmur glad tidings ; — the woods sleep in the shadow of Almighty wings ; — the stars are the Scriptures of Heaven — the token of love — and the witness of immortality. Night is the pilgrim's day." With these words the old man pressed Apæcides to his breast, and taking up his staff and scrip, the dog bounded cheerily before him, and with slow steps and down-cast eyes he went his way.

The convert stood watching his bended form, till the trees shut the last glimpse from his view : and then, as the stars broke forth he woke from his musing with a start, reminded of his appointment with Olinthus.

CHAPTER V.

THE FILTER — ITS EFFECT.

WHEN Glaucus arrived at his own home he found Nydia seated under the portico of his garden. In fact, she had sought his house in the mere chance that he *might* return at an early hour : anxious, fearful, anticipative, she resolved upon seizing the earliest opportunity of availing herself of the love charm, while at the same time she half hoped the opportunity might be deferred. Strange mixture of boldness and timidity, that when young we have all experienced : how often in our morning walks, or in the nightly crowd, in our first youth, have all of us at once sought and shunned the mistress of our heart, — gone miles in the hope of whispering one sweet word, and returned home the word unsaid ! Heaven be praised that we husband our time better after a little experience, and when we have less of youth and of love to throw away ! It was then in that fearful burning mood, her heart beating, her cheek flushing, that Nydia awaited the possibility of Glaucus's return before the night. He crossed the portico just as the first stars began to rise, and the heaven above had assumed its most purple robe.

"Ho, my child, wait you for me?"

"Nay ; I have been tending the flowers, and did but linger a little while to rest myself."

"It has been warm," said Glaucus, placing himself also on one of the seats beneath the colonnade.

"Very."

"Wilt thou summon Davus? the wine I have drunk heats me, and I long for some cooling drink."

Here at once, suddenly and unexpectedly, the very opportunity that Nydia awaited presented itself ; of himself, at his own free choice, he afforded to her that occasion. She breathed quick — "I will prepare for you myself," said she, "the summer draught that Ione loves, of honey and weak wine cooled in snow."

"Thanks," said the unconscious Glaucus ; "if Ione loves it, enough : it would be grateful were it poison."

Nydia frowned, and then smiled ; she withdrew for a few moments, and returned with the bowl containing the beverage. Glaucus took it from her hand. What would not Nydia have given then for one hour's prerogative

of sight, to have watched her hopes ripening to effect; — to have seen the first dawn of the imagined love; — to have worshipped with more than Persian adoration the rising of that sun which her credulous soul believed was to break upon her dreary night! Far different, as she stood then and there, were the thoughts, the emotions of the blind girl, from those of the vain Pompeian, under a similar suspense. In the last, what poor and frivolous passions had made up the daring whole! What petty pique, what small revenge, what expectation of a paltry triumph, had swelled the attributes of that sentiment she dignified with the name of love! but in the wild heart of the Thessalian all was pure, uncontrolled, unmodified passion; — erring — unwomanly — phrensied — but debased by no elements of a more sordid feeling. Filled with love as with life itself, how could she resist the occasion of winning love in return!

She leaned for support against the wall, and her face, before so flushed, was now white as snow, and with her delicate hands clasped convulsively together, her lips apart — her eyes on the ground — she waited the next words Glaucus should utter.

Glaucus had raised the cup to his lips, he had already drained about a fourth of its contents, when his eye suddenly glancing upon the face of Nydia, he was so forcibly struck by its alteration, by its intense, and painful, and strange expression, that he paused abruptly, and still holding the cup near his lips, exclaimed —

“Why Nydia, Nydia, I say, art thou ill, or in pain? nay, thy face speaks for thee. What ails my poor child?” As he spoke, he put down the cup and rose from his seat to approach her, — when a sudden pang shot coldly to his heart, and was followed by a wild, confused, dizzy sensation at the brain. The floor seemed to glide from under him — his feet seemed to move on air — a mighty and unearthly gladness rushed upon his spirit — he felt too buoyant for the earth — he longed for wings, nay, it seemed in the buoyancy of his new existence as if he possessed them. He burst involuntarily into a loud and thrilling laugh. He clapped his hands — he bounded aloft — he was a pythoness inspired; suddenly as it came, this preternatural transport passed, though only partially, away. He now felt his blood rushing loudly and rapidly through his veins; it seemed to swell — to exult — to leap along, as a stream that has burst its bounds, and hurries to the ocean. It throbbed in his ear with a mighty sound — he felt it mount to his brow — he felt the veins in the temples stretch and swell as if they could no longer contain the violent and increasing tide — then a kind of darkness fell over his eyes — darkness, but not entire; for through the dim shade he saw the opposite walls glow out, and the figures painted thereon seemed, ghost-like, to creep and glide. What was most strange, he did not feel himself ill — he did not sink or quail beneath the dread phrensy that was gathering over him. The novelty of the feelings seemed bright and vivid — he felt as if a younger health had been infused into his frame. He was gliding on to madness, and he knew it not!

Nydia had not answered his first question — she had not been able to reply — his wild and fearful laugh had roused her from her passionate suspense: she could not see his fierce gesture — she could not mark his reeling and unsteady step as he paced unconsciously to and fro; but she heard the broken words, incoherent, insane, that gushed from his lips. She became terrified and appalled — she hastened to him, feeling with her arms until she touched his knees, and then falling on the ground she embraced them, weeping with terror and excitation.

“Oh, speak to me! speak! you do not hate me? — speak, speak!”

“By the bright goddess, a beautiful land, this Cyprus! Ho! how they fill us with wine instead of blood! now they open the veins of the faun yonder, to show how it bubbles and sparkles. Come hither, jolly old god!

thou ridest on a goat, eh! — what long silky hair he has! He is worth all the coursers of Parthia. But a word with thee — this wine of thine is too strong for us mortals. Oh, beautiful! the boughs are at rest! the green waves of the forest have caught the zephyr and drowned him. Not a breath stirs the leaves — and I see the dreams sleeping with folded wings upon the motionless oak; and I look beyond, and I see a blue stream sparkle in the silent noon; a fountain — a fountain springing aloft. Ah! my fount, thou wilt not put out the rays of my Grecian sun, though thou triest ever so hard with thy nimble and silver arms. And now what form steals yonder through the boughs? she glides like a moon-beam! — she has a garland of oak-leaves on her head. In her hand is a vase upturned, from which she pours pink and tiny shells and sparkling waters. Oh! look on yon face! Man never before saw its like. See! we are alone; only I and she in the wide forest. There is no smile upon her lips — she moves grave and sweetly sad. Ha! fly, it is a nymph — it is one of the wild *Napææ*.* Whoever sees her becomes mad — fly! see, she discovers me.”

“Oh! Glaucus, Glaucus, do you not know me? rave not so wildly, or thou wilt kill me with a word.”

A new change seemed now to have operated upon the jarring and disordered mind of the unfortunate Athenian. He put his hands upon Nydia's silken hair; he smoothed the locks — he looked wistfully upon her face, and then, as in the broken chain of thought one or two links were yet unsevered, it seemed that her countenance brought its associations of Ione; and with that remembrance his madness became yet more powerful, and it was swayed and tinged by passion, as he burst forth —

“I swear by Venus, by Diana, and by Juno, that though I have now the world on my shoulders, as my countryman Hercules (ah, dull Rome! whoever was truly great was of Greece; why, you would be godless if it were not for us!) — I say, as my countrymen Hercules had before me, I would let it fall into chaos for one smile from Ione. Ah, beautiful, adored,” he added, in a voice inexpressibly fond and plaintive, “thou lovest me not. Thou art unkind to me. The Egyptian hath belied me to thee — thou knowest not what hours I have spent beneath thy casement — thou knowest not how I have out-watched the stars, thinking thou, my sun, wouldst rise at last, — and thou lovest me not, thou forsakest me! Oh! do not leave me now, I feel that my life will not be long; — let me gaze on thee at least unto the last. I am of the bright land of thy fathers — I have trod the heights of Phyle — I have gathered the hyacinth and rose amid the olive groves of Ilyssus. Thou shouldst not desert me, for thy fathers were brothers to my own. And they say this land is lovely, and these climes serene, but I will bear thee with me. Ho! dark form, why risest thou like a cloud between me and mine. Death sits calmly dread upon thy brow — in thy lip is the smile that slays; thy name is Orcus, but on earth men call thee Arbaces. See, I know thee; fly, dim shadow, thy spells avail not.”

“Glaucus! Glaucus!” murmured Nydia, releasing her hold and falling, beneath the excitement of her dismay, remorse, and anguish, insensible on the floor.

“Who calls?” said he, in a loud voice, “Ione, it is she! they have borne her off — we will save her — where is my stilus? Ha, I have it! I come Ione, to thy rescue! I come! I come!”

So saying the Athenian with one bound passed the portico, he traversed the house, and rushed with swift but vacillating steps, and muttering audibly to himself, down the starlit streets. The direful potion burnt like fire in his veins, for its effect was made, perhaps, still more sudden from the wine he had drunk previously. Used to the excesses of nocturnal revellers,

* Presiding over hills and woods.

the citizens with smiles and winks, gave way to his reeling steps; they naturally imagined him under the influence of the Bromian god, not vainly worshipped at Pompeii; but they who looked twice upon his face started in a nameless fear, and the smile withered from their lips. He passed the more populous streets—and, pursuing mechanically the way to Ione's house, he traversed a more deserted quarter, and entered now the lonely grove of Cybele, in which Apæcides had held his interview with Olinthus.

CHAPTER VI.

A REUNION OF DIFFERENT ACTORS—STREAMS THAT FLOWED APPARENTLY APART RUSH INTO ONE GULF.

IMPATIENT to learn whether the fell drug had yet been administered by Julia to his hated rival, and with what effect, Arbaces resolved, as the evening came on, to seek her house and satisfy his suspense. It was customary, as I have before said, for men at that time to carry abroad with them the tablets and the stilus attached to their girdle; and with the girdle they were put off when at home. In fact, under the appearance of a literary instrument, the Romans carried about with them in that same stilus a very sharp and formidable weapon. It was with his stilus* that Cassius stabbed Cæsar in the senate-house. Induing then his girdle and his cloak, Arbaces left his house, supporting his steps, which were still somewhat feeble (though hope and vengeance had conspired greatly with his own medical science, which was profound, to restore his natural strength), by his long staff, Arbaces took his way to the villa of Diomed.

And beautiful is the moonlight of the South! In those climes the night so quickly glides into the day, that twilight scarcely makes a bridge between them. One moment of darker purple in the sky—of a thousand rose hues in the water—of shade half victorious over light—and then burst forth at once the countless stars—the moon is up—night has resumed her reign!

Brightly then, and *softly* bright, fell the moonbeams over the antique grove consecrated to Cybele—the stately trees, whose date went beyond tradition, cast their long shadows over the soil, while through the openings in their boughs the stars shone, still and frequent. The whiteness of the small sacellum in the centre of the grove, amid the dark foliage, had in it something abrupt and startling: it recalled at once the purpose to which the wood was consecrated,—its holiness and solemnity.

With a swift and stealthy pace, Calenus, gliding under the shade of the trees, reached the chapel, and gently putting back the boughs that completely closed around its rear, settled himself in his concealment: a concealment so complete, what with the fane in front and the trees behind, that no unsuspecting passenger could possibly have detected him. Again all was apparently solitary in the grove; afar off you heard faintly the voices of some noisier revellers, or the music that played cheerily to the groups that then, as now in those climates, during the nights of summer, lingered in the streets, and enjoyed, in the fresh air and the liquid moonlight, a milder day.

From the height on which the grove was placed, you saw, through the intervals of the trees, the broad and purple sea rippling in the distance, the white villas of Stabizæ in the curving shore, and the dim Lactarian hills

* From this stilus may be derived the *stiletto* of the Italians.

mingling with the delicious sky. Presently, the tall figure of Arbaces, in his way to the house of Diomed, entered the extreme end of the grove, and at the same instant Apæcides, also bound to his appointment with Olinthus, crossed the Egyptian's path.

"Hem! Apæcides," said Arbaces, recognising the priest at a glance, "when last we met you were my foe. I have wished since then to see you, for I would have thee still my pupil and my friend."

Apæcides started at the voice of the Egyptian, and halting abruptly, gazed upon him with a countenance full of contending, bitter, and scornful emotions.

"Villain and impostor!" said he at length; "thou hast recovered then from the jaws of the grave. But think not again to weave around me thy guilty meshes. — *Retiarius*, I am armed against thee!"

"Hush!" said Arbaces, in a very low voice — but his pride, which in that descendant of great kings was great, betrayed the wound it received from the insulting epithets of the priest, in the quiver of his lip and the flush of his tawny brow.

"Hush! more low! thou mayst be overheard, and if other ears than mine had drunk these sounds — why —"

"Dost thou threaten? — what if the whole city had heard me? —"

"The manes of my ancestors would not have suffered me to forgive thee. But hold, and hear me. Thou art enraged that I would have offered violence to thy sister, — Nay, peace, peace, but one instant I pray thee. Thou art right, it was the phrensy of passion and of jealousy — I have repented bitterly of my madness. Forgive me; I who never implored pardon of living man, beseech thee now to forgive me. Nay, I will atone the insult — I ask thy sister in marriage; — start not, consider — what is the alliance of yon holyday Greek compared to mine? Wealth unbounded — birth that in its far antiquity leaves your Greek and Roman names the things of yesterday — science — but that thou knowest. Give me thy sister, and my whole life shall atone a moment's error."

"Egyptian, were even I to consent, my sister loathes the very air thou breathest; but I have my own wrongs to forgive — I may pardon thee that thou hast made me a tool to thy deceits, but never that thou hast seduced me to become the abettor of thy vices — a polluted and a perjured man. Tremble! even now I prepare the hour in which thou and thy false gods shall be unveiled. Thy lewd and Circean life shall be dragged to day — thy mumming oracles disclosed — the fane of the idol Isis shall be a by-word and a scorn — the royal name of Arbaces a mark for the hooting hisses of execration. Tremble!"

The flush on the Egyptian's brow was succeeded by a livid paleness. He looked behind, before, around, to feel assured that none was by, and then he fixed his dark and dilating eye on the priest with such a gaze of wrath and menace, that none, perhaps, but one supported like Apæcides by the fervent daring of a divine zeal, could have faced with unflinching look that lowering aspect. As it was, however, the young convert met it unmoved, and returned it with an eye of proud defiance.

"Apæcides," said the Egyptian, in a tremulous and inward tone, "beware! What is it thou wouldst meditate; speakest thou — reflect, pause, before thou repliest — from the hasty influences of wrath, as yet divining no settled purpose, or from some fixed design?"

"I speak from the inspiration of the True God, whose servant I now am," answered the Christian, boldly; "and in the knowledge that by his grace human courage has already fixed the date of thy hypocrisy and thy demon's worship; ere thrice the sun has dawned, thou wilt know all! Dark sorcerer, tremble, and farewell!"

All the fierce and lurid passions which he inherited from his nation and

his clime, at all times but ill concealed beneath the blandness of craft and the coldness of philosophy, were released in the breast of the Egyptian. Rapidly one thought chased another; he saw before him an obstinate barrier to even a lawful alliance with Ione — the fellow-champion of Glaucus in the struggle which had baffled his designs — the reviler of his name — the threatened desecrator of the goddess he served while he disbelieved — the avowed and approaching revealer of his own impostures and vices. His love, his repute, nay, his very life might be in danger — the day and hour seemed even to have been fixed for some design against him. He knew by the words of the convert that Apæcides had adopted the Christian faith; he knew the indomitable zeal which led on the proselytes of that creed. Such was his enemy; he grasped his stilus — that enemy was in his power! They were now before the chapel; one hasty glance once more he cast around; he saw none near; silence and solitude alike tempted him.

"Die, then, in thy rashness," he muttered; "away, obstacle to my rushing fates!"

And just as the young Christian had turned to depart, Arbaces raised his hand high over the left shoulder of Apæcides, and plunged his sharp weapon twice into his breast.

Apæcides fell to the ground pierced to the heart, — he fell mute, without even a groan, at the very base of the sacred chapel.

Arbaces gazed upon him for a moment with the fierce animal joy of conquest over a foe. But presently the full sense of the danger to which he was exposed flashed upon him; he wiped his weapon carefully in the long grass and with the very garments of his victim, drew his cloak round him, and was about to depart, when he saw coming up the path right before him the figure of a young man, whose steps reeled and vacillated strangely as he advanced; the quiet moonlight streamed full upon his face, which seemed by the whitening ray colourless as marble. The Egyptian recognised the form of Glaucus. The unfortunate and benighted Greek was chanting a disconnected and mad song, composed from snatches of hymns and sacred odes, all jarringly woven together.

"Ha!" thought the Egyptian, instantaneously divining his state and its terrible cause; "so, then, the hell-draught works, and destiny hath sent thee hither to crush two of my foes at once!"

Quickly, even ere this thought occurred to him, he had withdrawn on one side of the chapel, and concealed himself among the boughs; from that lurking place he watched, as a tiger in its lair, the advance of his second victim. He noted the wandering and restless fire in the bright and beautiful eyes of the Athenian; the convulsions that distorted his statue-like features and writhed his hueless lip. He saw that the Greek was utterly deprived of reason. Nevertheless, as Glaucus came up to the dead body of Apæcides, from which the dark red stream flowed slowly over the grass, so strange and ghastly a spectacle could not fail to arrest him, benighted and erring as was his glimmering sense. He paused, placed his hand to his brow, as if to collect himself, and then saying —

"What, ho! Endymion, sleepest thou so soundly? what has the moon said to thee? thou' makest me jealous; — it is time to wake." — He stooped down with the intention of lifting up the body.

Forgetting — feeling not — his own debility, the Egyptian sprung from his hiding place, and as the Greek bent, struck him forcibly to the ground, over the very body of the Christian; then raising his powerful voice to its loudest pitch, he shouted —

"Ho, citizens, ho! — help me! — run hither — hither! A murder — a murder before your very fane! Help, or the murderer escapes!" As he spoke he placed his foot on the breast of Glaucus; an idle and superfluous precaution, for the potion operating with the fall, the Greek lay there mo-

tionless and insensible, save that now and then his lips gave vent to some vague and raving sounds.

As he there stood awaiting the coming of those his voice still continued to summon, perhaps some remorse, some compunctious visitings—for despite his crimes he was human—haunted the breast of the Egyptian; the defenceless state of Glaucus—his wandering words—his riven reason, smote him even more than the death of Apæcides, and he said then half audibly to himself—

“Poor clay—poor human reason! *where is the soul now?* I could spare thee, O my rival—rival never more! but destiny must be obeyed, my safety demands thy sacrifice;” with that, as if to drown compunction, he shouted yet more loudly, and drawing from the girdle of Glaucus the stilus it contained, he steeped it in the blood of the murdered man, and laid it beside the corpse.

And now, fast and breathless, several of the citizens came thronging to the place, some with torches, which the moon rendered unnecessary, but which flared red and tremulously against the darkness of the trees; they surrounded the spot.

“Lift up yon corpse,” said the Egyptian, “and guard well the murderer.”

They raised the body, and great was their horror and sacred indignation to discover in that lifeless clay a priest of the adored and venerable Isis; but still greater, perhaps, was their surprise, when they found the accused in the brilliant and admired Athenian.

“Glaucus!” cried the bystanders, with one accord. “Is it even credible!”

“I would sooner,” whispered one man to his neighbour, “believe it to be the Egyptian himself.”

Here a centurion thrust himself into the increasing crowd with an air of authority.

“How! blood spilt! who the murderer?”

The bystanders pointed to Glaucus.

“He—by Mars, he has rather the air of being the victim! Who accuses him?”

“I,” said Arbaces, drawing himself up haughtily, and the jewels which adorned his dress flashing in the eyes of the soldier, instantly convinced that worthy warrior of the witness’s respectability.

“Pardon me—your name?” said he.

“Arbaces; it is well known, methinks, in Pompeii. Passing through the grove, I beheld before me the Greek and the priest in earnest conversation. I was struck by the reeling motions of the first, his violent gestures, and the loudness of his voice; he seemed to me either drunk or mad. Suddenly I saw him raise his stilus—I darted forward—too late to arrest the blow. He had stabbed twice his victim, and was bending over him, when in my horror and indignation I struck the murderer to the ground. He fell without a struggle, which makes me yet more suspect that he was not altogether in his senses when the crime was perpetrated; for, recently recovered from a severe illness, my blow was comparatively feeble, and the frame of Glaucus, as you see, is strong and youthful.”

“His eyes are open now—his lips move,” said the soldier. “Speak, prisoner, what sayst thou to the charge?”

“The charge—ha—ha! Why it was merrily done—when the old hag set her serpent at me, and Hecate stood by laughing from ear to ear—what could I do? But I am ill—I faint—the serpent’s fiery tongue hath bitten me. Bear me to bed, and send for your physician: old Æsculapius himself will attend me if you let him know that I am Greek. Oh, mercy—mercy—I burn!—marrow and brain, I burn!”

And with a thrilling and fierce groan, the Athenian fell back in the arms of the bystanders.

"He raves," said the officer, compassionately, "and in his delirium he has struck the priest. Hath any one seen him to-day?"

"I," said one of the spectators, "beheld him in the morning. He passed my shop and accosted me. He seemed well and sane as the stoutest of us."

"And I saw him half an hour ago," said another, "passing up the streets, muttering to himself with strange gestures, and just as the Egyptian has described."

"A corroboration of the witness! it must be too true. He must at all events to the prætor; a pity, so young and so rich; but the crime is dreadful: a priest of Isis, in his very robes too, and at the base itself of our most ancient chapel."

At these words the crowd were reminded more forcibly, than in their excitement and curiosity they had yet been, of the heinousness of the sacrilege. They shuddered in pious horror.

"No wonder the earth has quaked," said one, "when it held such a monster!"

"Away with him to prison—away!" cried they all.

And one solitary voice was heard shrilly and joyously above the rest,

"The beasts will not want a gladiator now."

"Tramp—tramp!—how gayly they go!"

Ho—ho! for the merry, merry show!"

It was the voice of the young woman, whose conversation with Medon has been repeated.

"True—true! it chanches in season for the games!" cried several: and at that thought all pity for the accused seemed vanished. His youth—his beauty—but fitted him better for the purpose of the arena.

"Bring hither some planks—or if at hand, a litter—to bear the dead," said Arbaces; "a priest of Isis ought scarcely to be carried to his temple by vulgar hands, like a butchered gladiator."

At this the bystanders reverently laid the corpse of Apæcides on the ground, with the face upwards, and some of them went in search of some contrivance to bear the body untouched by the profane.

It was just at that time that the crowd gave way to right and left as a sturdy form forced itself through, and Olinthus the Christian stood immediately confronting the Egyptian. But his eyes, at first, only rested with inexpressible grief and horror on that gory side and upturned face, on which the agony of violent death yet lingered.

"Murdered!" he said. "Is it thy zeal that has brought thee to this? Have they detected thy noble purpose, and by death prevented their own shame?"

He turned his head abruptly, and his eyes fell full on the solemn features of the Egyptian.

As he looked, you might see in his face, and even the slight shiver of his frame, the repugnance and aversion which the Christian felt for one whom he knew to be so dangerous and so criminal. It was indeed the gaze of the bird upon the basilisk—so silent was it and so prolonged. But shaking off the sudden chill that had crept over him, Olinthus extended his right arm towards Arbaces, and said in a deep and loud voice—

"Murder hath been done upon this corpse! Where is the murderer? Stand forth, Egyptian! For as the Lord liveth, I believe thou art the man!"

An anxious and perturbed change might for one moment be detected on the dusky features of Arbaces, but it gave way to the frowning expression

of indignation and scorn, as awed and arrested by the suddenness and vehemence of the charge, the spectators pressed nearer and nearer upon the two more prominent actors.

"I know," said Arbaces, proudly, "who is my accuser, and I guess wherefore he thus arraigns me. Men and citizens, know this man for the most bitter of the Nazarenes, if that or Christians be their proper name! What marvel that in his malignity he dares accuse even an Egyptian of the murder of a priest of Egypt!"

"I know him! I know the dog!" shouted several voices. "It is Olinthus the Christian — or rather the atheist — he denies the gods!"

"Peace! brethren," said Olinthus, with dignity, "and hear me! This murdered priest of Isis before his death embraced the Christian faith — he revealed to me the dark sins, the sorceries of yon Egyptian — the mummeries and delusions of the fane of Isis. He was about to declare them publicly. *He*, a stranger, unoffending, without enemies! who should shed his blood, but one of those who feared his witness? — who might fear that testimony the most? — Arbaces, the Egyptian!"

"You hear him!" said Arbaces, "you hear him! he blasphemes! — Ask him if he believes in Isis?"

"Do I believe in an evil demon?" returned Olinthus, boldly.

A groan and shudder passed through the assembly. Nothing daunted — for prepared at every time for peril, and in the present excitement losing all prudence, the Christian continued —

"Back, idolaters! this clay is not for your vain and polluting rites — it is to us — to the followers of Christ, that the last offices due to a Christian belong. I claim this dust in the name of the great Creator who has recalled the spirit!"

With so solemn and commanding a voice and aspect the Christian spoke these words, that even the crowd forbore to utter aloud the execration of fear and hatred, which in their hearts they conceived. And never, perhaps, since Lucifer and the arch angel contended for the body of the mighty Lawgiver, was there a more striking subject for the painter's genius than that scene exhibited. The dark trees — the stately fane — the moon full on the corpse of the deceased — the torches tossing wildly to and fro in the rear — the various faces of the motley audience — the insensible form of the Athenian, supported in the distance — and in the foreground, and, above all, — the forms of Arbaces and the Christian — the first drawn to his full height, far taller than the herd around; his arms folded, his brow knit, his eyes fixed, his lip slightly curled in defiance and disdain; the last, bearing on a brow worn and furrowed the majesty of an equal command — the features stern, yet frank — the aspect bold, yet open — the quiet dignity of the whole form impressed with an ineffable earnestness, hushed, as it were, in a solemn sympathy with the awe he himself had created — his left hand pointing to the corpse — his right hand raised to heaven.

The centurion pressed forward again.

"In the first place, hast thou, Olinthus, or whatever be thy name, any proof of the charge thou hast made against Arbaces, beyond thy vague suspicion?"

Olinthus remained silent — the Egyptian laughed contemptuously.

"Dost thou claim the body of a priest of Isis as one of the Nazarene or Christian sect?"

"I do."

"Swear, then, by yon fane, yon statue of Cybele, by yon most ancient sacellum in Pompeii, that the dead man embraced your faith!"

"Vain man! I disown your idols! I abhor your temples! How can I swear by Cybele, then?"

"Away! away with the atheist! away! the earth will swallow us

if we suffer these blasphemers in a sacred grove—away with him to death!”

“*To the beasts!*” added a female voice, in the centre of the crowd, “*we shall have one apiece now for the lion and tiger!*”

“If, Nazarene, thou disbelievest in Cybele, which of our gods dost thou own?” resumed the soldier, unmoved by the cries around.

“None!”

“Hark to him, hark!” cried the crowd.

“O vain and blind!” continued the Christian, raising his voice, “can you believe in images of wood and stone? Do you imagine that they have eyes to see, or ears to hear, or hands to help ye? Is yon mute thing, carved by man’s art, a goddess?—hath it made mankind—alas! by mankind was it made.—Lo! convince yourselves of its nothingness—of your folly.”

And as he spoke he strode across to the fane, and ere any of the bystanders were aware of his purpose, he, in his compassion or his zeal, struck the statue of wood from its pedestal.

“See!” cried he, “your goddess cannot avenge herself. Is this a thing to worship?”

Further words were denied to him; so gross and daring a sacrilege, of one too of the most sacred of their places of worship, filled even the most lukewarm with rage and horror. With one accord the crowd rushed upon him, seized, and but for the interference of the centurion, they would have torn him to pieces.

“Peace!” said the soldier, authoritatively, — “refer we this insolent blasphemer to the proper tribunal—time has been already wasted. Bear we both the culprits to the magistrates; place the body of the priest on the litter—carry it to his own home.”

At this moment a priest of Isis stepped forward. “I claim these remains, according to the custom of the priesthood.”

“The flamen be obeyed,” said the centurion. “How is the accused murderer?”

“Insensible, or asleep.”

“Were his crime less, I could pity him—On—”

Arbaces, as he turned, met the eye of that priest of Isis—it was Calens; and something there was in that glance so significant and sinister, that the Egyptian muttered to himself—

“Could he have witnessed the deed!”

A girl darted from the crowd, and gazed hard on the face of Olinthus. “By Jupiter, a stout knave!—I say, we shall have a man for the tiger now—one for each beast—huzza!”

“Huzza!” shouted the mob, “a man for the lion, and another for the tiger. What luck! huzza!”

CHAPTER VII.

IN WHICH THE READER LEARNS THE CONDITION OF GLAUCUS FRIENDSHIP TESTED — ENMITY SOFTENED — LOVE THE SAME; BECAUSE THE ONE LOVING IS BLIND!

THE night was somewhat advanced, and the gay lounging-places of the Pompeians were still crowded. You might observe in the countenances of the various idlers a more earnest expression than usual. They talked in large knots and groups, as if they sought by numbers to divide the half-painful, half-pleasurable anxiety which belonged to the subject on which they conversed: — It was a subject of life and death.

A young man passed briskly by the graceful portico of the temple of Fortune — so briskly, indeed, that he came with no slight force full against the rotund and comely form of that respectable citizen Diomed, who was retiring homeward to his suburban villa.

"Halloo!" groaned the merchant, recovering with some difficulty his equilibrium; "have you no eyes? or do you think I have no feeling? By Jupiter! you have well nigh driven out the divine particles; such another shock, and my soul will be in Hades!"

"Ah, Diomed! is it you? Forgive my inadvertence. I was absorbed in thinking of the reverses of life. Our poor friend Glaucus, eh? who could have guessed it?"

"Well, but tell me, Clodius, is he really to be tried by the senate?"

"Yes; they say the crime is of so extraordinary a nature, that the senate itself must adjudge it; and so the lictors are to idnuet him* formally.

"He has been accused publicly, then?"

"To be sure; where have you been not to hear that?"

"Why, I have only just returned from Neapolis, whither I went on business the very morning after his crime; — so shocking, and at my house the same night that it happened!"

"There is no doubt of his guilt," said Clodius, shrugging his shoulders; "and as these crimes take precedence of all little undignified peccadilloes, they will hasten to finish the sentence previous to the games."

"The games! Good gods!" replied Diomed, with a slight shudder; "can they adjudge him to the beasts — so young, so rich!"

"True; but then he is a Greek. Had he been a Roman, it would have been a thousand pities. These foreigners can be borne with in their prosperity; but in adversity we must not forget that they are in reality slaves. However, we of the upper classes are always tender-hearted; and he would certainly get off tolerably well if he were left to us; for, between ourselves, what is a paltry priest of Isis? what Isis herself? But the common people are superstitious; they clamour for the blood of the sacrilegious one. It is dangerous not to give way to public opinion."

"And the blasphemer — the Christian, or Nazarene, or whatever else he be called?"

"Oh, poor dog! if he will sacrifice to Cybele or Isis, he will be pardoned — if not, the tiger has him. At least so I suppose; but the trial will decide. We talk while the urn's still empty. And the Greek may yet escape the deadly Θ† of his own alphabet. But enough of this gloomy subject. How is the fair Julia?"

* Plin. Ep. ii. 11, 12, v. 4, 13.

† Θ, the initial of *Savatos* (Death,) the condemning letter of the Greeks, as C was of the Romans.

"Well, I fancy."

"Comment me to her. But, hark! the door yonder creaks on its hinges; it is the house of the prætor. Who comes forth? By Bacchus! it is the Egyptian! What can he want with our official friend?"

"Some conference touching the murder, doubtless," replied Diomed: "but what was supposed to be the inducement to the crime? Glaucus was to have married the priest's sister."

"Yes, some say Apæcides refused the alliance. It might have been a sudden quarrel. Glaucus was evidently inebriate — nay, so much so, as to have been quite insensible when taken up, and I hear is still delirious — whether with wine, terror, remorse, the Furies, or the Bacchanals, I cannot say."

"Poor fellow, has he good counsel?"

"The best — Caius Pollio, an eloquent fellow enough. Pollio has been hiring all the poor gentleman and well-born spendthrifts of Pompeii to dress shabbily and sneak about, swearing their friendship to Glaucus, (who would not have spoken to them to be made emperor! — I will do him justice, he was a gentleman in his choice of acquaintance,) and trying to melt his stony citizens into pity. But it won't do; Isis is mightily popular just at this moment."

"And, by-the-by, I have some merchandise at Alexandria. Yes, Isis ought to be protected."

"True; so farewell, old gentleman; we shall meet soon — if not, we must have a friendly bet at the amphitheatre. All my calculations are confounded by this cursed misfortune of Glaucus. He had bet on Lydon, the gladiator; I must make up my tablets elsewhere. *Vale!*"

Leaving the less active Diomed to regain his villa, Clodius strode on, humming a Greek air, and perfuming the night with the odours that steamed from his snowy garments and flowing locks.

"If," thought he, "Glaucus feed the lion, Julia will no longer have a person to love better than me: she will certainly dote on me; — and so, I suppose, I must marry. By the gods! the twelve lines begin to fail, — men look suspiciously at my hand when it rattles the dice. That infernal Sallust insinuates cheating; and if it be discovered that the ivory is cogged, why farewell to the merry supper and the perfumed billet; — Clodius is undone! Better marry, then, while I may, renounce gaming, and push my fortune (or rather the gentle Julia's) at the imperial court."

Thus muttering the schemes of his ambition, if by that high name the projects of Clodius may be called, the gamester found himself suddenly accosted; he turned, and beheld the dark brow of Arbaces.

"Hail, noble Clodius! pardon my interruption; and inform me, I pray you, which is the house of Sallust."

"It is but a few yards hence, wise Arbaces. But does Sallust entertain to-night?"

"I know not," answered the Egyptian, "nor am I, perhaps, one of those whom he would seek as a boon companion. But thou knowest that his house holds the person of Glaucus the murderer."

"Ah! he, good-hearted epicure, believes in the Greek's innocence! You remind me that he has become his surety; and, therefore, till the trial, is responsible for his appearance.* Well, Sallust's house is better than a prison, especially that wretched hole in the Forum. But for what can you seek Glaucus?"

"Why, noble Clodius, if we could save him from execution it would be well. The condemnation of the rich is a blow upon society itself. I should

* If a criminal could obtain surety, (called *vades*, in capital offences,) he was not compelled to lie in prison till after sentence.

like to confer with him — for I hear he has recovered his senses — and ascertain the motives of his crime, — they may be so extenuating as to plead in his defence.”

“You are benevolent, Arbaces.”

“Benevolence is the duty of one who aspires to wisdom,” replied the Egyptian, modestly. “Which way lies Sallust’s mansion?”

“I will show you,” said Clodius, “if you will suffer me to accompany you a few steps. But pray, what has become of the poor girl who was to have wed the Athenian — the sister of the murdered priest?”

“Alas! well-nigh insane. Sometimes she utters imprecations on the murderer — then suddenly stops short — then cries, ‘But *why* curse? Oh, my brother! Glaucus was *not* thy murderer — never will I believe it!’ Then she begins again, and again stops short and mutters awfully to herself, ‘Yet if it were indeed he!’”

“Unfortunate Ione!”

“But it is well for her that those solemn cares to the dead which religion enjoins have hitherto greatly absorbed her attention from Glaucus and herself; and, in the dimness of her senses, she scarcely seems aware that Glaucus is apprehended and on the eve of trial. When the funeral rites are performed, her apprehension will return; and then I fear me much, that her friends will be revolted by seeing her run to succour and aid the murderer of her brother!”

“Such scandal should be prevented.”

“I trust I *have* taken precautions to that effect. I am her lawful guardian, and have just succeeded in obtaining permission to escort her, after the burial of Apécides, to my own house: there, please the gods! she will be secure.”

“You have done well, sage Arbaces. And now, yonder is the house of Sallust. The gods keep you! Yet hark you, Arbaces, — why so gloomy and unsocial? Men say you *can* be gay, — why not let me initiate you into the pleasures of Pompeii? — I flatter myself no one knows them better.”

“I thank you, noble Clodius; under your auspices I might venture, I think to wear the philyra; but, at my age, I should be an awkward pupil.”

“Oh, never fear; I have made converts of fellows of seventy. The rich, too, are never old.”

“You flatter me. At some future time I will remind you of your promise.”

“You may command Marcus Clodius at all times; — and so *vale*!”

“Now,” said the Egyptian, soliloquizing, “I am not wantonly a man of blood; I would willingly save this Greek, if he will, by confessing the crime, be lost for ever to Ione, and for ever free me from the chance of discovery; and I *can* save him by persuading Julia to own the filter, which will be held his excuse. But if he do not confess the crime, why Julia must be shamed from the confession, and he must die! — die, lest he prove my rival with the living — die, that he may be my proxy with the dead. Will he confess? — can he not be persuaded that in his delirium he struck the blow? To me it would give far greater safety than even his death. Hem! we must hazard the experiment.”

Sweeping along the narrow street, Arbaces now approached the house of Sallust, when he beheld a dark form wrapped in a cloak, and stretched at length across the threshold of the door.

So still lay the figure, and so dim was its outline, that any other than Arbaces might have felt a superstitious fear lest he beheld one of those grim *lemures*, who, above all other spots, haunted the threshold of the homes they formerly possessed. But not for Arbaces were such dreams.

“Rise!” said he, touching the figure with his foot; “thou obstructest the way!”

"Ha! who art thou?" cried the form, in a sharp tone; and as she raised herself from the ground, the starlight fell full on the pale face and fixed but sightless eyes of Nydia the Thessalian. "Who art thou? I know the burden of thy voice."

"Blind girl! what dost thou here at this late hour? Fy! is this seeming thy sex or years? Home, girl!"

"I know thee," said Nydia, in a low voice; "thou art Arbaces the Egyptian;" then, as if inspired by some sudden impulse, she flung herself at his feet, and clasping his knees, exclaimed, in a wild and passionate tone, "O, dread potent man! save him—save him! he is not guilty—it is I! He lies within, ill, dying, and I—I am the hateful cause! And they will not admit me to him; they spurn the blind girl from the hall. O heal him! thou knowest some herb, some spell, some counter-charm—for it is a potion that hath wrought this phrensy!"

"Hush, child! I know all; thou forgettest that I accompanied Julia to the saga's home. Doubtless her hand administered the draught; but her reputation demands thy silence. Reproach not thyself—what must be, must: meanwhile, I seek the criminal; he may yet be saved. Away!"

Thus saying, Arbaces extricated himself from the clasp of the despairing Thessalian, and knocked loudly at the door.

In a few moments the heavy bars were heard sullenly to yield, and the porter, half-opening the door, demanded who was there.

"Arbaces—important business to Sallust relative to Glaucus. I come from the prætor."

The porter, half-yawning, half-groaning, admitted the tall form of the Egyptian. Nydia sprang forward. "How is he?" she cried, "tell me—tell me!"

"Ho! mad girl, is it thou still?—for shame. Why, they say he is sensible."

"The gods be praised!—and you will not admit me? Ah! I beseech thee—"

"Admit thee! no. A pretty salute I should prepare for these shoulders were I to admit such things as thou! Go home!"

The door closed, and Nydia, with a deep sigh, laid herself down once more on the cold stones; and wrapping her cloak round her face, resumed her weary vigil.

Meanwhile Arbaces had already gained the triclinium where Sallust, with his favourite freedman, sat late at supper.

"What! Arbaces! and at this hour! Accept this cup."

"Nay, gentle Sallust; it is on business, not pleasure, that I venture to disturb thee. How doth thy charge? They say in the town that he has recovered sense."

"Alas! and truly," replied the good-natured but thoughtless Sallust, wiping the tear from his eyes; "but so shattered are his nerves and frame, that I scarcely recognise the brilliant and gay carouser I was wont to know. Yet, strange to say, he cannot account for the cause of the sudden phrensy that seized him; he retains but a dim consciousness of what hath passed; and despite thy witness, wise Egyptian, solemnly upholds his innocence of the death of Apécides."

"Sallust," said Arbaces, gravely, "there is much in thy friend's case that merits a peculiar indulgence; and could we learn from his lips the confession and the cause of his crime, much might be yet hoped from the mercy of the senate; for the senate, thou knowest, hath the power either to mitigate or to sharpen the law. Therefore it is that I have conferred with the highest authority of the city, and obtained his permission to hold a private conference this night with the Athenian. To-morrow, thou knowest, the trial comes on."

"Well," said Sallust, "thou wilt be worthy of thy eastern name and fame if thou canst learn aught from him; but thou mayst try. Poor Glaucus! and he had such an excellent appetite! He eats nothing now!"

The benevolent epicure was moved sensibly at this thought. He sighed, and ordered his slaves to refill his cup.

"Night wanes," said the Egyptian; "suffer me to see thy ward now."

Sallust nodded assent, and led the way to a small chamber, guarded without by two dozing slaves. The door opened; at the request of Arbaces, Sallust withdrew — the Egyptian was alone with Glaucus.

One of those tall and graceful candelabra common to that day, supporting a single lamp, burned beside the narrow bed. Its rays fell palely over the face of the Athenian, and Arbaces was moved to see how sensibly that countenance had changed. The rich colour was gone, the cheek was sunk, the lips were convulsed and pallid; fierce had been the struggle between reason and madness, life and death. The youth, the strength of Glaucus had conquered; but the freshness of blood and soul — the life of life, its glory, and its zest, were gone for ever.

The Egyptian seated himself quietly beside the bed; Glaucus still lay mute and unconscious of his presence. At length, after a considerable pause, Arbaces thus spoke:

"Glaucus, we have been enemies. I come to thee alone, and in the dead of night — thy friend, perhaps thy saviour."

As the steed starts from the path of the tiger, Glaucus sprang up breathless — alarmed, panting at the abrupt voice, the sudden apparition of his foe. Their eyes met, and neither, for some moments, had power to withdraw his gaze. The flush went and came over the face of the Athenian, and the bronzed cheek of the Egyptian grew a shade more pale. At length, with an inward groan, Glaucus turned away, drew his hand across his brow, sunk back, and muttered —

"Am I still dreaming?"

"No, Glaucus, thou art awake. By this right hand, and my father's head, thou seest one who may save thy life. Hark! I know what thou hast done, but I know also its excuse, of which thou thyself art ignorant. Thou hast committed murder, it is true — a sacrilegious murder: frown not — start not — these eyes saw it. But I can save thee — I can prove how thou wert bereaved of sense, and made not a free-thinking and free-acting man. But in order to save thee, thou must confess thy crime. Sign but this paper, acknowledging thy hand in the death of Apæcides, and thou shalt avoid the fatal urn."

"What words are these! — murder and Apæcides! — Did I not see him stretched on the ground bleeding and a corpse? and wouldst thou persuade me that I did the deed? Man, thou liest! — away!"

"Be not rash — Glaucus, be not hasty; the deed is proved; come, come, thou mayst well be excused for not recalling the act of thy delirium, and which thy sober senses would have shunned even to contemplate. But let me try to refresh thy exhausted and weary memory. Thou knowest thou wert walking with the priest, disputing about his sister; thou knowest he was intolerant, and half a Nazarene, and he sought to convert thee, and ye had hot words; and he calumniated thy mode of life, and swore he would not marry Ione to thee — and then, in thy wrath and thy phrensy, thou didst strike the sudden blow. Come, come! you can recollect this! — read this papyrus, it runs to that effect — sign it, and thou art saved."

"Barbarian, give me the written lie, that I may tear it! I the murderer of Ione's brother! I confess to have injured one hair of the head of him she loved! Let me rather perish a thousand times!"

"Beware!" said Arbaces, in a low and hissing tone; "there is but one

choice — thy confession and thy signature, — or the amphitheatre and the lion's maw!"

As the Egyptian fixed his eyes upon the sufferer, he hailed with joy the signs of evident emotion that seized the latter at these words. A slight shudder passed over the Athenian's frame — his lip fell — an expression of sudden fear and wonder betrayed itself in his brow and eye.

"Great gods!" he said, in a low voice, "what reverse is this? It seems but a little day since life laughed out from amid roses — lone mine — youth, health, love, lavishing on me their treasures — and now; pain, madness, shame, death! And for what? what have I done? Oh, I am mad still!"

"Sign, and be saved!" said the soft sweet voice of the Egyptian.

"Tempter, never!" cried Glaucus, in the reaction of rage. "Thou knowest me not; thou knowest not the haughty soul of an Athenian! The sudden face of death might appal me for a moment, but the fear is over. Dishonour appeals for ever! Who will debase his name to save his life? who exchange clear thoughts for sullied days? who will belie himself to shame, and stand blackened in the eyes of glory and of love? If to earn a few years of polluted life there be so base a coward, dream not, dull barbarian of the east! to find him in one who has trod the same sod as Harmodius, and drank the same air as Socrates. Go! leave me to live without self-reproach — or to perish without fear!"

"Bethink thee well! the lion's fangs; the hoots of the brutal mob; the vulgar gaze on thy dying agony and mutilated limbs; thy name degraded; thy corpse unburied; the shame thou wouldst avoid clinging to thee for aye and ever!"

"Thou ravest! thou art the madman! Shame is not in the loss of other men's esteem, — it is in the loss of our own. Wilt thou go? — my eyes loathe the sight of thee! hating ever, I despise thee now!"

"I go!" said Arbaces, stung and exasperated, but not without some pitying admiration of his victim: "I go; we meet twice again — once at the Trial — once at the Death! Farewell!"

The Egyptian rose slowly, gathered his robes about him, and left the chamber. He sought Sallust for a moment, whose eyes began to reel with the vigils of the cup: "He is still unconscious, or still obstinate; there is no hope for him."

"Say not so," replied Sallust, who felt but little resentment against the Athenian's accuser, for he possessed no great austerity of virtue, and was rather moved by his friend's reverses than persuaded of his innocence, — "Say not so, my Egyptian! so good a drinker shall be saved if possible. Bacchus against Isis!"

"We shall see," said the Egyptian.

Sullenly the bolts were again withdrawn — the door unclosed; Arbaces was in the open street; and poor Nydia once more started from her long watch.

"Wilt thou save him?" she cried, clasping her hands.

"Child, follow me home; I would speak to thee — it is for his sake I ask it.

"And thou wilt save him?"

No answer came forth to the thirsting ear of the blind girl; Arbaces had already proceeded far up the street: she hesitated a moment, and then followed his steps in silence.

"I must secure this girl," said he musingly, "lest she give evidence of the filter; as to the vain Julia, she will not betray herself."

CHAPTER VIII.

A CLASSIC FUNERAL.

WHILE Arbaces had been thus employed, sorrow and death were in the house of Ione. It was the night preceding the morn in which the solemn funeral rites were to be decreed to the remains of the murdered Apæcides. The corpse had been removed from the temple of Scio to the house of the nearest surviving relative, and Ione had heard, at the same breath, the death of her brother and the accusation against her betrothed. That first violent anguish which blunts the sense to all but itself, and the forbearing silence of her slaves, had prevented her learning minutely the circumstances attendant on the fate of her lover. His illness, his phrensy, and his approaching trial, were unknown to her. She learned only the accusation against him, and at once indignantly rejected it; nay, on hearing that Arbaces was the accuser, she required no more to induce her firmly and solemnly to believe that the Egyptian himself was the criminal. But the vast and absorbing importance attached by the ancients to the performance of every ceremonial connected with the death of a relation, had, as yet, confined her wo and her convictions to the chamber of the deceased. Alas! it was not for her to perform that tender and touching office, which obliged the nearest relative to endeavour to catch the last breath—the parting soul—of the beloved one;—but it was hers to close the straining eyes, the distorted lips; to watch by the consecrated clay, as, fresh bathed and anointed, it lay in festive robes upon the ivory bed; to strew the couch with leaves and flowers, and to renew the solemn cypress-branch at the threshold of the door. And in these sad offices, in lamentation and in prayer, Ione forgot herself. It was among the loveliest customs of the ancients to bury the young at the morning twilight; for, as they strove to give the softest interpretation to death, so they poetically imagined that Aurora, who loved the young, had stolen them to her embrace; and though in the instance of the murdered priest this fable could not appropriately cheat the fancy, the general custom was still preserved.*

The stars were fading one by one from the gray heavens, and night slowly receding before the approach of morn, when a dark group stood motionless before Ione's door. High and slender torches, made paler by the unmellowed dawn, cast their light over various countenances, hushed for the moment in one solemn and intent expression. And now there rose a slow and dismal music, which accorded sadly with the rite, and floated far along the desolate and breathless streets; while a chorus of female voices, (the *Præfæ* so often cited by the Roman poets,) accompanying the Tibicin and the Mysian flute, woke the following strain:—

THE FUNERAL DIRGE.

O'er the sad threshold, where the cypress bough
 Supplants the rose that should adorn thy home,
 On the last pilgrimage on earth that now
 Awaits thee, wanderer to Cocytus, come!
 Darkly we woo, and weeping we invite—
 Death is thy host—his banquet asks thy soul;
 Thy garlands hang within the House of Night,
 And the black stream alone shall fill thy bowl.

* This was rather a Greek than a Roman custom; but the reader will observe, that in the cities of Magna Græcia, the Greek customs and superstitions were much mingled with the Roman.

No more for thee the laughter and the song,
 The jocund night—the glory of the day!
 The Argive daughters* at their labours long;
 The hell-bird swooping on his Titan prey—
 The false Æolides† upheaving slow,
 O'er the eternal hill, the eternal stone;
 The crowned Lydian‡ in his parching wo,
 And green Calirrhoe's monster-headed son,§—
 These shalt thou see, dim-shadowed through the dark
 Which makes the sky of Pluto's dreary shore;
 Lo! where thou stand'st, pale-gazing on the bark,
 That waits our rite,|| to bear thee trembling o'er!
 Come, then! no more delay!—the phantom pines
 Amid the unburied for its latest home:
 O'er the gray sky the torch impatient shines—
 Come, mourner, forth!—the lost one bids thee come!

As the hymn died away, the group parted in twain; and placed upon a couch, spread with a purple pall, the corpse of Apæcides was carried forth with the feet foremost. The designator, or marshal of the sombre ceremonial, accompanied by his torch-bearers clad in black, gave the signal, and the procession moved dreadly on.

First went the musicians, playing a slow march—the solemnity of the lower instruments broken by many a louder and wilder burst of the funeral trumpet; next followed the hired mourners, chanting their dirges to the dead; and the female voices were mingled with those of boys, whose tender years made still more striking the contrast of life and death—the fresh leaf and the withered one. But the players, the buffoons, the archimimus, (whose duty it was to personate the dead,)—these, the customary attendants at ordinary funerals, were banished from a funeral attended with so many terrible associations.

The priests of Isis came next in their snowy garments, barefooted, and supporting sheaves of corn; while before the corpse were carried the images of the deceased, and his many Athenian forefathers. And behind the bier followed, amid her women, the sole surviving relative of the dead—her head bare, her locks dishevelled, her face paler than marble, but composed and still, save ever and anon, as some tender thought, awakened by the music, flashed upon the dark lethargy of wo, she covered that countenance with her hands, and sobbed unseen; for hers was not the noisy sorrow, the shrill lament, the ungoverned gesture, which characterized those who honoured less faithfully. In that age, as in all, the channel of deep grief flowed hushed and still.

And so the procession swept on, till it had traversed the streets, passed the city gate, and gained the Place of Tombs without the wall, which the traveller yet beholds.

Raised in the form of an altar—of unpolished pine, amid whose interstices were placed preparations of combustible matter—stood the funeral pyre; and around it dropped the dark and gloomy cypresses so consecrated by song to the tomb.

As soon as the bier was placed upon the pile, the attendants parting on either side, lone passed up to the couch, and stood before the unconscious clay for some moments motionless and silent. The features of the dead had been composed from the first agonized expression of violent death. Hushed for ever the terror and the doubt, the contest of passion, the awe of religion, the struggle of the past and present, the hope and the horror of

* The Danaides. † Sisyphus. ‡ Tantalus. § Geryon.

|| The most idle novel-reader need scarcely be reminded, that not till after the funeral rites were the dead carried over the Styx.

the future!—of all that racked and desolated the breast of that young aspirant to the holy of life, what trace was visible in the awful serenity of that impenetrable brow and unbreathing lip! The sister gazed, and not a sound was heard amid the crowd; there was something terrible, yet softening also, in the silence; and when it broke, it broke sudden and abrupt—it broke with a loud and passionate cry—the vent of long-smothered despair.

"My brother, my brother!" cried the poor orphan, falling upon the couch; "thou whom the worm on thy path feared not—what enemy couldst thou provoke? Oh, is it in truth come to this? Awake! awake! we grew together! Are we thus torn asunder? Thou art not dead—thou sleepest. Awake! awake!"

The sound of her piercing voice aroused the sympathy of the mourners, and they broke into loud and rude lament. This startled, this recalled lone; she looked hastily and confusedly up, as if for the first time sensible of the presence of those around.

"Ah!" she murmured, with a shiver, "*we are not then alone!*"

With that, after a brief pause, she rose; and her pale and beautiful countenance was again composed and rigid. With fond and trembling hands she unclosed the lids of the deceased;* but when the dull glazed eye, no longer beaming with love and life, met hers, she shrieked aloud as if she had seen a spectre. But once more recovering herself, she kissed again and again the lids, the lips, the brow; and, with mechanic and unconscious hand, received from the high-priest of her brother's temple the funeral torch.

The sudden burst of music, the sudden song of the mourners, announced the birth of the sanctifying flame—

HYMN TO THE WIND.

1.

On thy couch of cloud reclined,
Wake, O soft and sacred wind!
Soft and sacred will we name thee,
Whosoe'er the sire that claim thee—
Whether old Auster's dusky child,
Or the loud son of Eurus wild;
Or his† who o'er the darkling deeps,
From the bleak North, in tempest sweeps;
Still shalt thou seem as dear to us
As flowery-crowned Zephyrus,
When, through twilight's starry dew,
Trembling, he hastes his nymph‡ to woo!

2.

Lo! our silver censers swinging,
Perfumes o'er thy path are flinging,—
Ne'er o'er Tempe's breathless valleys,
Ne'er o'er Cypria's cedarn alleys,—
Or the Rose-isle's§ moonlit sea,
Floated sweets more worthy thee.
Lo! around our vases sending,
Myrrh and nard with Cassia blending;
Paving air with odours meet
For thy silver-sandall'd feet!

* Pfin. R. 37.

† Boreas.

‡ Flora.

§ Rhodes

3.

August and everlasting Air!
 The source of all that breathe and be,
 From the mute clay before thee bear
 The seeds it took from thee!
 Aspire, bright flame! aspire!
 Wild wind! — awake, awake!
 Thine own, O solemn Fire!
 O Air, thine own retake!

4.

It comes, it comes! Lo! it sweeps,
 The Wind we invoke the while!
 And crackles, and darts, and leaps
 The light on the holy pile!
 It rises! its wings interweave
 With the flames, — how they howl and heave!
 Tossed, whirled to and fro,
 How the flame serpents glow!
 Rushing higher and higher,
 On — on, fearful Fire!
 Thy giant limbs twined
 With the arms of the Wind
 Lo! the elements meet on the throne
 Of death — to reclaim their own!

5.

Swing, swing the censer round —
 Tune the strings to a softer sound,
 From the chains of thy earthly toil,
 From the clasp of thy mortal coil,
 From the prison where clay confined thee,
 The hands of the flames unbind thee!
 O, soul! thou art free — all free!
 As the winds in their ceaseless chase,
 When they rush o'er their airy sea,
 Thou mayst speed through the realms of space.
 No fetter is forged for thee!
 Rejoice! o'er the sluggish tide
 Of the Styx thy bark can glide,
 And thy steps evermore shall rove
 Through the glades of the happy grove
 Where, far from the loath'd Cocytus,
 The loved and the lost invite us.
 Thou art slave to the earth no more!
 O, soul thou art freed! — and we?
 Ah! when shall our toil be o'er?
 Ah! when shall we rest with thee?

And now high and far into the dawning skies broke the fragrant fire; it flashed luminously across the gloomy cypresses, — it shot above the massy walls of the neighbouring city; and the early fisherman started to behold the blaze reddening on the waves of the creeping sea.

But Ione sat down apart and alone; and leaning her face upon her hands, saw not the flame, nor heard the lamentation or the music, — she felt only one sense of loneliness — she had not yet arrived at that hallowing sense of comfort when we know that we are not alone — that the dead are with us!

The breeze rapidly aided the effect of the combustibles placed within the pile. By degrees the flame wavered, lowered, dimmed, and slowly, by

fits and unequal starts, died away: emblem of life itself; where, just before, all was restlessness and flame, now lay the dull and smouldering ashes.

The last sparks were extinguished by the attendants — the embers were collected. Steeped in the rarest wine and the costliest odours, the remains were placed in a silver urn, which was solemnly stored in one of the neighbouring sepulchres beside the road; and they placed within it the vial full of tears, and the small coin which poetry still consecrated to the grim boatman. And the sepulchre was covered with flowers and chaplets, and incense kindled on the altar, and the tomb hung round with many lamps.

But the next day, when the priest returned with fresh offerings to the tomb, he found that to the relics of heathen superstition some unknown hands had added a green palm-branch. He suffered it to remain, unknowing that it was the sepulchral emblem of Christianity.

When the above ceremonies were over, one of the præfices three times sprinkled the mourners from the purifying branch of laurel, uttering the last word, "*Illic!*" — Depart! — and the rite was done.

But first they paused to utter, weepingly and many times, the affecting farewell, "*Salve Eternum!*" and as Ione yet lingered, they woke the parting strain.

SALVE ETERNUM,

1.

Farewell, O soul departed!
 Farewell, O sacred urn!
 Bereaved and broken-hearted,
 To earth the mourners turn!
 To the dim and dreary shore,
 Thou art gone our steps before!
 But thither the swift hours lead us,
 And thou dost but a while precede us!
 Salve — salve!
 Loved urn, and thou solemn cell,
 Mute ashes! — farewell, farewell!
 Salve — salve!

2.

Illicet — ire licet —
 Ah, vainly would we part!
 Thy tomb is the faithful heart.
 About evermore we bear thee;
 For who from the heart can tear thee?
 Vainly we sprinkle o'er us
 The drops of the cleansing stream;
 And vainly bright before us
 The lustral fire shall beam.
 For where is the charm expelling
 Thy thought from its sacred dwelling?
 Our griefs are thy funeral feast,
 And memory thy mourning priest.
 Salve — salve!

3.

Illicet — ire licet!
 The spark from the hearth is gone
 Wherever the air shall bear it;
 The elements take their own —
 The shadows receive thy spirit.

It will sooth thee to feel our grief,
 As thou glid'st by the gloomy river ;
 If love may in life be brief,
 In death it is fixed for ever.
 Salve — salve !
 In the hall which our feasts illumine
 The rose for an hour may bloom ;
 But the cypress that decks the tomb —
 The cypress is green for ever !
 Salve — salve !

CHAPTER IX.

IN WHICH AN ADVENTURE HAPPENS TO IONE.

WHILE some stayed behind to share with the priests the funeral banquet, Ione and her handmaids took homeward their melancholy way. And now (the last duties to her brother performed) her mind woke from its absorption, and she thought of her affianced, and the dread charge against him. Not, as we have before said, attaching a momentary belief to the unnatural accusation, but nursing the darkest suspicion against Arbaces, she felt that justice to her lover and to her murdered relative demanded her to seek the prætor, and communicate her impression, unsupported as it might be. Questioning her maidens, who had hitherto — kindly anxious, as I have said, to save her the additional agony — refrained from informing her of the state of Glaucus, she learned that he had been dangerously ill ; that he was in custody under the roof of Sallust ; that the day of his trial was appointed.

"Averting gods !" she exclaimed ; "and have I been so long forgetful of him ? Have I seemed to shun him ? O ! let me hasten to do him justice — to show that I, the nearest relative of the dead, believe him innocent of the charge. Quick ! quick ! — let us fly. Let me sooth — tend — cheer him ! and if they will not believe me ; if they will not yield to my conviction ; if they sentence him to exile or to death, let me share the sentence with him !"

Instinctively she hastened her pace, confused and bewildered, scarce knowing whither she went ; now designing first to seek the prætor, and now to rush to the chamber of Glaucus. She hurried on — she passed the gate of the city — she was in the long street leading up the town. The houses were opened, but none were yet astir in the streets : the life of the city was scarce awake — when, lo ! she came suddenly upon a small knot of men standing beside a covered litter. A tall figure stepped from the midst of them, and Ione shrieked aloud to behold Arbaces.

"Fair Ione !" said he gently, and appearing not to heed her alarm ; "my ward, my pupil ! forgive me if I disturb thy pious sorrows ; but the prætor, solicitous of thy honour, and anxious that thou mayest not rashly be implicated in the coming trial, knowing the strange embarrassment of thy state (seeking justice for thy brother, but dreading punishment to thy betrothed) — sympathizing, too, with thy unprotected friendless condition, and deeming it harsh that thou shouldst be suffered to act unguided and mourn alone — hath wisely and paternally confided thee to the care of thy lawful guardian. Behold the writing which intrusts thee to my charge !"

"Dark Egyptian !" cried Ione, drawing herself proudly aside ; "begone ! Is it thou that hast slain my brother ! Is it to thy care, thy hands yet reeking with his blood, that they will give the sister ? Ha ! thou turnest pale !

thy conscience smites thee! thou tremblest at the thunderbolt of the avenging God! Pass on, and leave me to my wo!"

"Thy sorrows unstring thy reason, Ione," said Arbaces, attempting in vain his usual calmness of tone. "I forgive thee. Thou wilt find me now, as ever, thy surest friend. But the public streets are not the fitting place for us to confer—for me to console thee. Approach, slaves! Come my sweet charge, the litter awaits thee."

The amazed and terrified attendants gathered round Ione, and clung to her knees.

"Arbaces," said the eldest of the maidens, "this is surely not the law! For nine days after the funeral, is it not written that the relatives of the deceased shall not be molested in their homes, or interrupted in their solitary grief?"

"Woman!" returned Arbaces, imperiously waving his hand, "to place a ward under the roof of her guardian, is not against the funeral law. I tell thee, I have the fiat of the prætor. This delay is indecorous. Place her in the litter!"

So saying he threw his arm firmly round the sinking form of Ione. She drew back, gazed earnestly in his face, and then burst into hysterical laughter:—

"Ha, ha! this is well—well! Excellent guardian—paternal law! Ha, na!"—and, startled herself at the dread echo of that shrill and maddened laughter, she sunk, as it died away, lifeless upon the ground. . . . A minute more and Arbaces had lifted her into the litter. The bearers moved swiftly on, and the unfortunate Ione was soon borne from the sight of her weeping handmaids.

CHAPTER X.

WHAT BECOMES OF NYDIA IN THE HOUSE OF ARBACES—THE EGYPTIAN FEELS COMPASSION FOR GLAUCUS—COMPASSION IS OFTEN A VERY USELESS VISITOR TO THE GUILTY.

It will be remembered that at the command of Arbaces, Nydia followed the Egyptian to his home, and, conversing there with her, he learned from the confession of her despair and remorse, that her hand, and not Julia's, had administered to Glaucus the fatal potion. At another time the Egyptian might have conceived a philosophical interest in sounding the depths and origin of the strange and absorbing passion which, in blindness and in slavery, this singular girl had dared to cherish; but at present he spared no thought from himself. As, after her confession, the poor Nydia threw herself on her knees before him, and besought him to restore the health and save the life of Glaucus—for in her youth and ignorance she imagined the dark magician all-powerful to effect both—Arbaces, with unheeding ears, was noting only the new expediency of detaining Nydia a prisoner until the trial and fate of Glaucus were decided. For if, when he judged her merely the accomplice of Julia in obtaining the filter, he had felt it was dangerous to the full success of his vengeance to allow her to be at large—to appear, perhaps as a witness—to avow the manner in which the sense of Glaucus had been darkened, and thus win indulgence to the crime of which he was accused—how much more was she likely to volunteer her testimony when she herself had administered the draught, and inspired by love, would be only anxious, at any expense of shame, to retrieve her error and preserve her beloved? Besides, how unworthy of the rank and the repute of Arbaces

to be implicated in the disgrace of pandering to the passion of Julia, and assisting in the unholy rites of the saga of Vesuvius! Nothing less, indeed, than his desire to induce Glaucus to own the murder of Apæcides, as a policy evidently the best both for his own permanent safety and his successful suit with Ione, could ever have led him to contemplate the confession of Julia.

As for Nydia, who was necessarily cut off by her blindness from much of the knowledge of active life, and who, a slave and a stranger, was naturally ignorant of the perils of the Roman law, she thought rather of the illness and delirium of her Athenian, than the crime of which she had vaguely heard him accused, or the chances of the impending trial. Poor wretch that she was, whom none addressed, none cared for, what did she know of the senate and the sentence — the hazard of the law — the ferocity of the people — the arena and the lion's den? She was accustomed only to associate with the thought of Glaucus every thing that was prosperous and lofty — she could not imagine that any peril, save from the madness of her love, could menace that sacred head. He seemed to her set apart for the blessings of life. *She* only had disturbed the current of his felicity; she knew not, she dreamed not, that the stream, once so bright, was dashing on to darkness and to death. It was therefore to restore the brain that *she* had marred, to save the life that *she* had endangered, that she implored the assistance of the great Egyptian.

"Daughter," said Arbaces, waking from his revery, "thou must rest here; it is not meet for thee to wander along the streets, and be spurned from the threshold by the rude foot of slaves. I have compassion on thy soft crime — I will do all to remedy it. Wait here patiently for some days, and Glaucus shall be restored." So saying, and without waiting for her reply, he hastened from the room, drew the bolt across the door, and consigned the care and wants of his prisoner to the slave who had the charge of that part of the mansion.

Alone, then, and musingly, he waited the morning light, and with it repaired, as we have seen, to possess himself of the person of Ione.

His primary object with respect to the unfortunate Neapolitan was that which he had really stated to Clodius, viz. to prevent her interesting herself actively in the trial of Glaucus, and also to guard against her accusing him (which she would doubtless have done) of his former act of perfidy and violence towards her, his ward — denouncing his causes for vengeance against Glaucus — unveiling the hypocrisy of his character — and casting any doubt upon his veracity in the charge which he had made against the Athenian. Not till he had encountered her that morning, not till he had heard her loud denunciations, was he aware that he had also another danger to apprehend in her suspicion of his crime. He hugged himself now in the thought that these objects were effected; that one, at once the creature of his passion and his fear, was in his power. He believed more than ever the flattering promises of the stars; and when he sought Ione in that chamber in the inmost recesses of his mysterious mansion to which he had consigned her, when he found her overpowered by blow upon blow, and passing from fit to fit, from violence to torpor, in all the alternations of hysterical disease — he thought more of the loveliness, which no phrensy could distort, than of the wo which he had brought upon her. In that sanguine vanity common to men who through life have been invariably successful, whether in fortune or love, he flattered himself that when Glaucus had perished, when his name was solemnly blackened by the award of a legal judgment, his title to her love for ever forfeited by condemnation to death for the murder of her own brother — her affection would be changed to horror; and that his tenderness and his passion, assisted by all the arts with which he well knew how to dazzle woman's imagination, might elect

him to that throne in her heart from which his rival would be so awfully expelled. This was his hope; but should it fail, his unholy and fervid passion whispered, "At the worst, *now* she is in my power!"

Yet, withal, he felt that uneasiness and apprehension which attend upon the chance of detection even when the criminal is insensible to the voice of conscience — that vague terror of the consequences of crime, which is often mistaken for remorse at the crime itself. The buoyant air of Campania weighed heavily upon his breast; he longed to hurry from a scene where danger might not sleep eternally with the dead; and having Ione now in his possession, he secretly resolved, as soon as he had witnessed the last agony of his rival, to transport his wealth — and her, the costliest treasure of all — to some distant shore.

"Yes," said he, striding to and fro his solitary chamber; "yes, the law that gave me the person of my ward gives me the possession of my bride. Far across the broad main will we sweep on our search after novel luxuries and inexperienced pleasure. Cheered by my stars, supported by the omens of my soul, we will penetrate to those vast and glorious worlds which my wisdom tells me lie yet untracked in the recesses of the circling sea. There may this heart, possessed of love, grow at length alive to ambition — there, among nations uncrushed by the Roman yoke, and to whose ear the name of Rome has not yet been wafted, I may found an empire, and transplant my ancestral creed; renewing the ashes of the dead Theban rule, continuing in yet grander shores the dynasty of my crowned fathers, and waking in the noble heart of Ione the grateful consciousness that she shares the lot of one who, far from the aged rottenness of this slavish civilization, restores the primal elements of greatness, and unites in one mighty soul the attributes of the prophet and the king."

From this exultant soliloquy, Arbaces was awakened to attend the trial of the Athenian.

The worn and pallid cheek of his victim touched him less than the firmness of his nerves and the dauntlessness of his brow; for Arbaces was one who had little pity for what was unfortunate, but a strong sympathy for what was bold. The congenialities that bind us to others ever assimilate to the qualities of our own nature. The hero weeps less at the reverses of his enemy than at the fortitude with which he bears them. All of us are human, and Arbaces, criminal as he was, had his share of our common feelings and our mother clay. Had he but obtained from Glaucus the written confession of his crime, which would, better than even the judgment of others, have lost him with Ione, and removed the chance of future detection from Arbaces, he would have strained every nerve to save him. Even now his hatred was over — his desire of revenge was slaked; he crushed his prey, not in enmity, but as an obstacle in his path. Yet was he not the less resolved, the less crafty and persevering in the course he pursued for the destruction of one whose doom was become necessary to the attainment of his objects; and while, with apparent reluctance and compassion, he gave against Glaucus the evidence which condemned him, he secretly, and through the medium of the priesthood, fomented that popular indignation which made an effectual obstacle to the pity of the senate. He had sought Julia; he had detailed to her the confession of Nydia; he had easily, therefore, lulled any scruple of conscience which might have led her to extenuate the offence of Glaucus by avowing her share in his phrensy; and the more readily, for her vain heart had loved the fame and the prosperity of Glaucus — not Glaucus himself; she felt no affection for a disgraced man — nay, she almost rejoiced in a disgrace that humbled the hated Ione. If Glaucus could not be her slave, neither could he be the adorer of her rival. This was sufficient consolation for any regret at his fate. Volatile and fickle, she began already to be moved by the sudden and earnest suit of Clo-

dus, and was not willing to hazard the loss of an alliance with that base but high-born noble by any public exposure of her past weakness and immodest passion for another. All things then smiled upon Arbaces — all things frowned upon the Athenian.

CHAPTER XI.

NYDIA AFFECTS THE SORCERESS.

WHEN the Thessalian found that Arbaces returned to her no more — when she was left, hour after hour, to all the torture of that miserable suspense which was rendered by blindness doubly intolerable, she began, with outstretched arms, to feel around her prison for some channel of escape ; and finding the only entrance secure, she called aloud, and with the vehemence of a temper naturally violent, and now sharpened by impatient agony.

"Ho, girl," said the slave in attendance, opening the door, "art thou bit by a scorpion? or thinkest thou that we are dying of silence here, and only to be preserved, like the infant Jupiter, by a hulloaloo?"

"Where is thy master? and wherefore am I caged here? I want air and liberty; let me go forth!"

"Alas! little one, hast thou not seen enough of Arbaces to know that his will is imperial? He hath ordered thee to be caged; and caged thou art, and I am thy keeper. Thou canst not have air and liberty; but thou mayst have what are much better things — food and wine."

"Proh Jupiter!" cried the girl, wringing her hands; "and why am I thus imprisoned? what can the great Arbaces want with so poor a thing as I am?"

"That I know not, unless it be to attend on thy new mistress, who has been brought hither this day."

"What! Ione here?"

"Yes, poor lady; she liked it little, I fear. Yet, by the temple of Castor!" Arbaces is a gallant man to the women. Thy lady is his ward, thou knowest."

"Wilt thou take me to her?"

"She is ill — frantic with rage and spite. Besides, I have no orders to do so; and I never think for myself. When Arbaces made me slave of these chambers,* he said, "I have but one lesson to give thee — while thou servest me, thou must have neither ears, eyes, nor thought; thou must be but one quality — obedience."

"But what harm is there in seeing Ione?"

"That I know not; but if thou wantest a companion, I am willing to talk to thee, little one, for I am solitary enough in my dull cubiculum; and, by the way, thou art Thessalian — knowest thou not some cunning amusement of knife-and-shears, some pretty trick of telling fortunes, as most of thy race do, in order to pass the time?"

"Tush, slave! hold thy peace! or if thou wilt speak, what hast thou heard of the state of Glaucus?"

"Why, my master has gone to the Athenian's trial; Glaucus will smart for it!"

"For what?"

"The murder of the priest Apæcides."

* In the houses of the great, each suite of chambers had its petuñlar slave.

"Ha!" said Nydia, pressing her hands to her forehead, "something of this I have indeed heard, but understand not. Yet who will dare to touch a hair of his head?"

"That will the lion, I fear."

"Averting gods! what wickedness dost thou utter?"

"Why only that, if he be found guilty, the lion, or maybe the tiger, will be his executioner."

Nydia leaped up, as if an arrow had entered her heart: she uttered a piercing scream; then, falling before the feet of the slave, she cried in a tone that melted even his rude heart,—

"Ah! tell me thou jestest—thou utterest not the truth—speak, speak!"

"Why, by my faith, blind girl, I know nothing of the law; it may not be so bad as I say. But Arbaces is his accuser, and the people desire a victim for the arena. Cheer thee! But what hath the fate of the Athenian to do with thine?"

"No matter, no matter—he has been kind to me; thou knowest not, then, what they will do? Arbaces his accuser! O fate! The people—the people! Ah! they can look upon his face—who will be cruel to the Athenian?—yet was not love itself cruel to him?"

So saying, her head drooped upon her bosom; she sunk into silence; scalding tears flowed down her cheeks; and all the kindly efforts of the slave were unable either to console her or distract the absorption of her revery.

When his household cares obliged the ministrant to leave her room, Nydia began to recollect her thoughts: Arbaces was the accuser of Glaucus; Arbaces had imprisoned her here; was not that a proof that her liberty might be serviceable to Glaucus? Yes, she was evidently inveigled into some snare; she was contributing to the destruction of her beloved! Oh, how she panted for release! Fortunately for her sufferings, all sense of pain became merged in the desire of escape; and as she began to revolve the possibility of deliverance, she grew calm and thoughtful. She possessed much of the craft of her sex, and it had been increased in her breast by her early servitude. What slave was ever destitute of cunning? She resolved to practise upon her keeper; and, calling suddenly to mind his superstitious query as to her Thessalian art, she hoped by that handle to work out some method of release. These doubts occupied her mind during the rest of the day and the long hours of night; and accordingly when Sosia visited her the following morning, she hastened to divert his garrulity into that channel in which it had before evinced a natural disposition to flow.

She was aware, however, that her only chance of escape was at night; and accordingly she was obliged, with a bitter pang at the delay, to defer till then her purposed attempt.

"The night," said she, "is the sole time in which we can well decipher the decrees of fate—then it is thou must seek me. But what desirest thou to learn?"

"By Pollux, I should like to know as much as my master; but that is not to be expected. Let me know, at least, whether I shall save enough to purchase my freedom, or whether this Egyptian will give it me for nothing. He does such generous things sometimes. Next, supposing that be true, shall I possess myself of that snug taberna among the myropolia* which I have long had in my eye? 'Tis a genteel trade that of a perfumer, and suits a retired slave who has something of a gentleman about him!"

"Ay! so you would have precise answers to those questions: there are various ways of satisfying you. There is the lithomanteia, or speaking-

* The shops of the perfumers.

stone, which answers your prayer with an infant's voice; but then we have not that precious stone with us—costly is it, and rare. Then there is the gastromanteia, whereby the demon casts pale and ghastly images upon water, prophetic of the future. But this art requires also glasses of a peculiar fashion, to contain the consecrated liquid, which we have not. I think, therefore, that the simplest method of satisfying your desire would be by the magic of air."

"I trust," said Sosia, tremulously, "that there is nothing very frightful in the operation? I have no love for apparitions."

"Fear not; thou wilt see nothing; thou wilt only hear by the bubbling of water whether or not thy suit prospers. First, then, be sure, from the rising of the evening star, that thou leavest the garden-gate somewhat open, so that the demon may feel himself invited to enter therein; and place fruits and water near the gate as a sign of hospitality; then, three hours after twilight, come here with a bowl of the coldest and purest water, and thou shalt learn all according to the Thessalian lore my mother taught me. But forget not the garden-gate—all rests upon that; it must be open when you come, and for three hours previously."

"Trust me," replied the unsuspecting Sosia, "I know what a gentleman's feelings are when a door is shut in his face, as the cook-shop's hath been in mine many a day; and I know also, that a person of respectability, as a demon of course is, cannot but be pleased, on the other hand, with any little mark of courteous hospitality. Meanwhile, pretty one, here is thy morning's meal."

"And what of the trial?"

"O, the lawyers are still at it—talk, talk—it will last over till to-morrow."

"To-morrow—you are sure of that?"

"So I hear."

"And Ione?"

"By Bacchus! she must be tolerably well, for she was strong enough to make my master stamp and bite his lip this morning. I saw him quit her apartment with a brow like a thunder-storm."

"Lodges she near this?"

"No—in the upper apartments. But I must not stay prating here longer—vale!"

CHAPTER XII.

A WASP VENTURES INTO THE SPIDER'S WEB.

THE second night of the trial had set in; and it was nearly the time in which Sosia was to brave the dread unknown, when there entered, at that very garden gate which the slave had left ajar—not, indeed, one of the mysterious spirits of earth or air, but the heavy and most human form of Calenus, the priest of Isis. He scarcely noted the humble offerings of indifferent fruit, and still more indifferent wine, which the pious Sosia had deemed good enough for the invisible stranger they were intended to allure. "Some tribute," thought he, "to the garden god. By my father's head! if his deityship were never better served, he would do well to give up the godly profession. Ah! were it not for us priests, the gods would have a sad time of it. And now for Arbaces—I am treading a quicksand, but it ought to cover a mine. I have the Egyptian's life in my power—what will he value it at?"

As he thus soliloquized he crossed through the open court into the peristyle, where a few lamps here and there broke upon the empire of the starlit night; and, issuing from one of the chambers that bordered the colonnade, suddenly encountered Arbaces.

"Ho! Calenus—seekest thou me?" said the Egyptian; and there was a little embarrassment in his voice.

"Yes, wise Arbaces—I trust my visit is not unseasonable?"

"Nay—it was but this instant that my freedman Callias sneezed thrice at my right hand; I knew, therefore, some good fortune was in store for me—and, lo! the gods have sent me Calenus."

"Shall we within to your chamber, Arbaces?"

"As you will; but the night is clear and balmy—I have some remains of languor yet lingering on me from my recent illness—the air refreshes me—let us walk in the garden—we are equally alone there."

"With all my heart," answered the priest; and the two friends passed slowly to one of the many terraces which, bordered by marble vases and sleeping flowers, intersected the garden.

"It is a lovely night," said Arbaces—"blue and beautiful as that on which, twenty years ago, the shores of Italy first broke upon my view. My Calenus, age creeps upon us—let us at least feel that we have lived."

"Thou, at least, mayst arrogate that boast," said Calenus, beating about, as it were, for an opportunity to communicate the secret which weighed upon him, and feeling his usual awe of Arbaces still more impressively that night, from the quiet and friendly tone of dignified condescension which the Egyptian assumed—"Thou, at least, mayst arrogate that boast. Thou hast had countless wealth—a frame on whose close-woven fibres disease can find no space to enter—prosperous love—inexhaustible pleasure—and, even at this hour, triumphant revenge."

"Thou alludest to the Athenian. Ay, to-morrow's sun the fiat of his death will go forth. The senate does not relent. But thou mistakest—his death gives me no other gratification than that it releases me from a rival in the affections of Ione. I entertain no other sentiment of animosity against that unfortunate homicide."

"Homicide!" repeated Calenus, slowly and meaningly; and, halting as he spoke, he fixed his eyes upon Arbaces. The stars shone pale and steadily on the proud face of their prophet, but they betrayed there no change; the eyes of Calenus fell disappointed and abashed. He continued rapidly—"Homicide! it is well to charge him with that crime; but thou, of all men, knowest that he is innocent."

"Explain thyself," said Arbaces, coldly—for he had prepared himself for the hint his secret fears had foretold.

"Arbaces," answered Calenus, sinking his voice into a whisper, "I was in the sacred grove, sheltered by the chapel and the surrounding foliage. I overheard—I marked the whole. I saw thy weapon pierce the heart of Apocides. I blame not the deed—it destroyed a foe and an apostate."

"Thou sawest the whole!" said Arbaces, dryly; "so I imagined—thou wert alone."

"Alone!" returned Calenus, surprised at the Egyptian's calmness.

"And wherefore wert thou hid behind the chapel at that hour?"

"Because I had learned the conversion of Apocides to the Christian faith—because I knew that on that spot he was to meet the fierce Olinthus—because they were to meet there to discuss plans for unveiling the sacred mysteries of our goddess to the people—and I was there to detect, in order to defeat them."

"Hast thou told living ear what thou didst witness?"

"No, my master; the secret is locked in thy servant's breast."

"What! even thy kinsman Burbo guesses it not? come, the truth!"

"By the gods—"

"Hush! we know each other—what are the gods to us?"

"By the fear of thy vengeance, then, no!"

"And why hast thou hitherto concealed from me this secret? why hast thou waited till the eve of the Athenian's condemnation before thou hast ventured to tell me that Arbaces is a murderer? And, having tarried so long, why revealest thou now that knowledge?"

"Because—because—" stammered Calenus, colouring and in confusion.

"Because," interrupted Arbaces, with a gentle smile, and tapping the priest on the shoulder with a kindly and familiar gesture, "because, my Calenus—(see now, I will read thy heart and explain its motives)—because thou didst wish thoroughly to commit and entangle me in the trial, so that I might have no loop-hole of escape—that I might stand firmly pledged to perjury and to malice, as well as to homicide—that, having myself whetted the appetite of the populace to blood, no wealth, no power could prevent my becoming their victim: and thou tellest me thy secret now, ere the trial be over and the innocent condemned, to show what a dexterous web of villany thy word to-morrow could destroy—to enhance, in this, the ninth hour, the price of thy forbearance—to show that my own arts in arousing the popular wrath would, at thy witness, recoil upon myself; and that, if not for Glaucus, *for me* would gape the jaws of the lion! Is it not so?"

"Arbaces," replied Calenus, losing all the vulgar audacity of his natural character, "verily thou art a magian; thou readest the heart as it were a scroll."

"It is my vocation," answered the Egyptian, laughing gently. "Well, then, forbear; and when all is over I will make thee rich."

"Pardon me," said the priest, as the quick suggestion of that avarice which was his master passion bade him trust to no *future* chance of generosity. "Pardon me; thou saidst right—we know each other. If thou wouldst have me silent, thou must pay something in advance, as an offer to Harpocrates.* If the rose, sweet emblem of discretion, is to take root firmly, water her this night with a stream of gold."

"Witty and poetical!" answered Arbaces, still in that bland voice which lulled and encouraged, when it ought to have alarmed and checked his griping comrade: wilt thou not wait the morrow?"

"Why this delay? Perhaps when I can no longer give my testimony without shame for not having given it ere the innocent man suffered, thou wilt forget thy claim; and, indeed, thy present hesitation is a bad omen of thy future gratitude."

"Well, then, Calenus, what wouldst thou have me pay thee?"

"Thy life is very precious, and thy wealth is very great," returned the priest, grinning.

"Wittier and more witty. But speak out—what shall be the sum?"

"Arbaces, I have heard that in thy secret treasury below, beneath those rude Oscan arches which prop thy stately halls, thou hast piles of gold, of vases, and of jewels, which might rival the receptacles of the wealth of the deified Nero. Thou mayst easily spare out of those piles enough to make Calenus among the richest priests of Pompeii, and yet not miss the loss."

"Come, Calenus," said Arbaces, winningly, and with a frank and generous air, "thou art an old friend, and hast been a faithful servant. Thou canst have no wish to take away my life, nor I a desire to stint thy reward: thou shalt descend with me to that treasury thou referrest to; thou shalt feast thine eyes with the blaze of uncounted gold, and the sparkle of priceless gems; and thou shalt, for thy own reward, bear away with thee this night as much as thou canst conceal beneath thy robes. Nay, when thou

* The god of silence.

hast once seen what thy friend possesses, thou wilt learn how foolish it would be to injure one who has so much to bestow. When Glaucus is no more, thou shalt pay the treasury another visit. Speak I frankly, and as a friend?"

"O, greatest, best of men!" cried Calenus, almost weeping with joy. "Canst thou thus forgive my injurious doubts of thy justice, thy generosity?"

"Hush! one other turn, and we will descend to the Oscan arches."

CHAPTER XIII.

THE SLAVE CONSULTS THE ORACLE—THEY WHO BLIND THEMSELVES THE BLIND MAY POOL—TWO NEW PRISONERS MADE IN ONE NIGHT.

IMPATIENTLY Nydia waited the arrival of the no less anxious Sosia. Fortifying his courage by plentiful potations of a better liquor than that provided for the demon, the credulous ministrant stole into the blind girl's chamber.

"Well, Sosia, and art thou prepared? Hast thou the bowl of pure water?"

"Verily, yes; but I tremble a little. You are sure I shall not see the demon. I have heard that those gentlemen are by no means of a handsome person or a civil demeanour."

"Be assured! And hast thou left the garden-gate gently open?"

"Yes; and placed some beautiful nuts and apples on a little table close by."

"That's well. And the gate is open now, so that the demon may pass through it?"

"Surely it is."

"Well, then, open this door; there—leave it just ajar. And now, Sosia, give me the lamp."

"What! you will not extinguish it?"

"No; but I must breathe my spell over its ray. There is a spirit in fire. Seat thyself."

The slave obeyed; and Nydia, bending for some moments silently over the lamp, now rose, and in a low voice chanted the following rude and doggerel

INVOCATION TO THE SPECTRE OF AIR.

Loved alike by Air and Water
Aye must be Thessalia's daughter;
To us, Olympian hearts, are given
Spells that draw the moon from heaven.
All that Egypt's learning wrought—
All that Persia's Magian taught;
Won from song, or wrung from flowers,
Or whispered low by fiend—are ours.
Spectre of the viewless air,
Hear the blind Thessalian's prayer;
By Erictho's art, that shed
Dews of life when life was fled;—
By lone Ithaca's wise king,
Who could wake the crystal spring
To the voice of prophecy;—
By the lost Eurydice,

Summoned from the shadowy throng,
 At the muse-son's magic song —
 By the Colchian's awful charms,
 When fair-haired Jason left her arms ; —
 Spectre of the airy halls,
 One who owns thee duly calls
 Breathe along the brimming bowl,
 And instruct the fearful soul
 In the shadowy things that lie
 Dark in dim futurity.
 Come, wild demon of the air,
 Answer to thy votary's prayer !
 Come ! oh, come !
 And no god on heaven or earth —
 Not the Paphian Queen of Mirth,
 Nor the vivid Lord of Light,
 Nor the triple Maid of Night,
 Nor the Thunderer's self shall be
 Bless'd and honoured more than thee !
 Come ! — oh, come !

"The spectre is certainly coming," said Sosia ; "I feel him running along my hair!"

"Place thy bowl of water on the ground. Now, then, give me thy napkin, and let me fold up thy face and eyes."

"Ay! that's always the custom with these charms. Not so tight, though; gently—gently!"

"There—thou canst not see?"

"See, *per Jove!* No! nothing but darkness."

"Address, then, to the spectre whatever question thou wouldst ask him, in a low-whispered voice, three times. If thy question is answered in the affirmative, thou wilt hear the water ferment and bubble before the demon breathes upon it; if in the negative, the water will be quite silent."

"But you will not play any trick with the water, eh?"

"Let me place the bowl under thy feet—so. Now thou wilt perceive that I cannot touch it without thy knowledge."

"Very fair. Now, then. O Bacchus! befriend me. Thou knowest that I have always loved thee better than all the other gods, and I will dedicate to thee that silver cup I stole last year from the burly carptor (butler), if thou wilt but befriend me with this water-loving demon. And thou, O spirit! listen and hear me. Shall I be enabled to purchase my freedom next year? Thou knowest; for, as thou livest in the air, the birds* have doubtless acquainted thee with every secret of this house; thou knowest that I have filched and pilfered all that I honestly—that is, safely—could lay finger upon for the last three years, and I yet want two thousand sesterces of the full sum. Shall I be able, O good spirit! to make up the deficiency in the course of this year? Speak! Ha! does the water bubble? No; all is still as a tomb. Well, then, if not this year—in two years? Ah! I hear something; the demon is scratching at the door: he'll be here presently. In two years, my good fellow; come now, two;—that's a very reasonable time. What! dumb still! Two years and a half—three—four? Ill fortune to you, friend demon! You are not a lady, that's clear, or you would not keep silence so long. Five—six—sixty years? and may Pluto seize you! I'll ask no more." And Sosia, in a rage, kicked down the water over his legs. He then, after much fumbling and more cursing, managed

* Who were supposed to know all secrets. The same superstition prevails in the east, and is not without example, also, in our northern legends.

to extricate his head from the napkin in which it was completely folded — stared round — and discovered that he was in the dark.

"What, ho! Nydia! the lamp is gone. Ah, traitress! and thou art gone too; but I'll catch thee — thou shalt smart for this!"

The slave groped his way to the door; it was bolted from without; he was a prisoner instead of Nydia. What could he do? He did not dare to knock loud — to call out — lest Arbaces should overhear him, and discover how he had been duped; and Nydia, meanwhile, had probably already gained the garden-gate, and was fast on her escape.

"But," thought he, "she will go home, or at least be somewhere in the city. To-morrow at dawn, when the slaves are at work in the peristyle, I can make myself heard; then I can go forth and seek her. I shall be sure to find and bring her back before Arbaces knows a word of the matter. Ah! that's the best plan. Little traitress, my fingers itch at thee; and to leave only a bowl of water, too! had it been wine, it would have been some comfort.

While Sosia, thus entrapped, was lamenting his fate, and revolving his schemes to repossess himself of Nydia, the blind girl, with that singular precision and dexterous rapidity of motion which, we have before observed, was peculiar to her, had passed lightly along the peristyle, threaded the opposite passage that led into the garden, and with a beating heart, was about to proceed towards the gate, when she suddenly heard the sound of approaching steps, and distinguished the dreaded voice of Arbaces himself. She paused for a moment in doubt and terror; then suddenly it flashed across her recollection that there was another passage, which was little used except for the admission of the fair partakers of the Egyptian's secret revels, and which wound along the basement of that massive fabric towards a door, which also communicated with the garden. By good fortune it might be open. At that thought she hastily retraced her steps, descended the narrow stairs at the right, and was soon at the entrance of the passage. Alas! the door at that entrance was closed and secured. While she was yet assuring herself that it was indeed locked, she heard behind her the voice of Calenus, and a moment after that of Arbaces, in low reply. She could not stay there; they were probably passing to that very door. She sprang onward, and felt herself in unknown ground. The air grew damp and chill; this reassured her. She thought she might be among the cellars of the luxurious mansion, or at least in some rude spot not likely to be visited by its haughty lord, when again her quick ear caught steps and the sound of voices. On, on she hurried, extending her arms, which now frequently encountered pillars of thick and massive form. With a tact doubled in acuteness by her fear, she escaped these perils, and continued her way, the air growing more and more damp as she proceeded; yet still, as she ever and anon paused for breath, she heard the advancing steps and the indistinct murmur of voices. At length she was abruptly stopped by a wall that seemed the limit of her path. Was there no spot in which she could hide? No aperture? no cavity? There was none! she stopped, and wrung her hands in despair; then again, nerved as the voices neared upon her, she hurried on by the side of the wall; and coming suddenly against one of the sharp buttresses, that here and there jutted boldly forth, she fell to the ground. Though much bruised, her senses did not leave her. She uttered no cry; nay, she hailed the accident that had led her to something like a screen; and creeping close up to the angle formed by the buttress, so that on one side at least she was sheltered from view, she gathered her slight and small form into its smallest compass, and breathlessly awaited her fate.

Meanwhile, Arbaces and the priest were taking their way to that secret chamber whose stores were so vaunted by the Egyptian. They were in a vast subterranean atrium or hall; the low roof was supported by short thick pillars of an architecture far remote from the Grecian graces of that luxu-

riant period. The single and pale lamp which Arbaces bore shed but an imperfect ray over the bare and rugged walls, in which the huge stones, without cement, were fitted curiously and uncouthly into each other. The disturbed reptiles glared dully on the intruders, and then crept into the shadow of the walls.

Calenus shivered as he looked around and breathed the damp unwholesome air.

"Yet," said Arbaces, with a smile, perceiving his shudder, "it is these rude abodes that furnish the luxuries of the halls above. They are like the labourers of the world,—we despise their ruggedness, yet they feed the very pride that disdains them."

"And whither goes yon dim gallery to the left?" asked Calenus; "in this depth of gloom it seems without limit, as if winding into Hades."

"On the contrary, it does but conduct to the upper day," answered Arbaces, carelessly; "it is to the right that we steer to our bourne."

The hall, like many in the more habitable regions of Pompeii, branched off at the extremity into two wings or passages; the length of which, not really great, was to the eye considerably exaggerated by the sullen gloom against which the lamp so faintly struggled. To the right of these the two comrades now directed their steps.

"The gay Glaucus will be lodged to-morrow in apartments not much drier and far less spacious than this," said Calenus, as they passed by the very spot where, completely wrapped in the shadow of the broad projecting buttress, cowered the Thessalian.

"Ah, but then he will have dry room, and ample enough, in the arena on the following day. And to think," continued Arbaces, slowly, and very deliberately, "to think that a word of thine could save him, and consign Arbaces to his doom!"

"That word shall never be spoken," said Calenus.

"Right, my Calenus, it never shall!" returned Arbaces, familiarly leaning his arm on the priest's shoulder; "and now, halt—we are at the door."

The light trembled against a small door deep set in the wall, and guarded strongly by many plates and bindings of iron, that intersected the rough and dark wood. From his girdle Arbaces now drew a small ring, holding three or four short but strong keys. Oh, how beat the griping heart of Calenus, as he heard the rusty wards growl, as if resenting admission to the treasures they guarded!

"Enter, my friend," said Arbaces, "while I hold the lamp on high that thou mayest glut thine eyes on the yellow heaps."

The impatient Calenus did not wait to be twice invited; he hastened towards the aperture.

Scarce had he crossed the threshold, when the strong hand of Arbaces plunged him forwards.

"*The word shall never be spoken!*" said he, with a loud exultant laugh, and closed the door upon the priest.

Calenus had been precipitated down several steps, but not feeling at the moment the pain of his fall, he sprang up again to the door, and beating at it fiercely with his clenched fist, he cried aloud in what seemed more a beast's howl than a human voice, so keen was his agony and despair, "Oh, release me, release me, and I will ask no gold!"

The words but imperfectly penetrated the massive door, and Arbaces again laughed. Then, stamping his foot violently, rejoiced, perhaps, to give vent to his long-stifled passions—

"All the gold of Dalmatia," cried he, "will not buy thee a crust of bread! Starve, wretch!—thy dying groans will never wake even the echo of these vast halls! Nor will the air ever reveal, as thou gnawest, in thy desperate

famine, thy flesh from thy bones, that so perishes the man who threatened and could have undone Arbaces! Farewell!"

"Oh, pity!—mercy! Inhuman villain! was it for this—"

The rest of the sentence was lost to the ear of Arbaces, as he passed backward along the dim hall. A toad, plump and bloated, lay unmoving before his path; the rays of the lamp fell upon its unshaped hideousness and red upward eye. Arbaces turned aside that he might not harm it.

"Thou art loathsome and obscene," he muttered, "but thou canst not injure me; therefore thou art safe in my path."

The cries of Calenus, dulled and choked by the barrier that confined him, yet faintly reached the ear of the Egyptian. He paused and listened intently.

"This is unfortunate," thought he; "for I cannot sail till that voice is dumb for ever. My stores and my treasures lie not in yon dungeon, it is true, but in the opposite wing. My slaves, as they move them, must not hear his voice. But what fear of that? In three days, if he still survive, his accents, by my father's beard! must be weak enough then. No, they could not pierce even through his tomb. By Isis, it is cold! I long for a deep draught of the spiced Falernian!"

With that the remorseless Egyptian drew his gown closer round him, and resought the upper air.

CHAPTER XIV.

NYDIA ACCOSTS CALENUS.

WHAT words of terror, yet of hope, had Nydia overheard! The next day Glaucus was to be condemned; yet there lived one who could save him, and adjudge Arbaces to his doom, and that one breathed within a few steps of her hiding-place! She caught his cries and shrieks—his imprecations—his prayers, though they fell choked and muffled on her ear. He was imprisoned, but she knew the secret of his cell: could she but escape—could she but seek the prætor, he might yet in time be given to light, and preserve the Athenian. Her emotions almost stifled her; her brain reeled—she felt her sense give way—but by a violent effort she mastered herself; and after listening intently for several minutes, till she was convinced that Arbaces had left the space to solitude and herself, she crept on till her ear guided her to the very door that had closed upon Calenus. Here she more distinctly caught his accents of terror and despair. Thrice she attempted to speak, and thrice her voice failed to penetrate the folds of the heavy door. At length, finding the lock, she applied her lips to its small aperture, and the prisoner distinctly heard a soft tone breathe his name.

His blood curdled—his hair stood on end. That awful solitude, what mysterious and preternatural being could penetrate! "Who's there?" he cried, in new alarm; "what spectre—what dread *larva*, calls upon the lost Calenus?"

"Priest," replied the Thessalian, "unknown to Arbaces, I have been, by the permission of the gods, a witness to his perfidy. If I myself can escape from these walls, I may save thee. But let thy voice reach my ear through this narrow passage, and answer what I ask."

"Ah, blessed spirit!" said the priest, exultingly, and obeying the suggestion of Nydia; "save me, and I will sell the very cups on the altar to pay thy kindness."

"I want not thy gold—I want thy secret. Did I hear aright?—canst thou save the Athenian Glaucus from the charge against his life?"

"I can—I can!—therefore—(may the furies blast the foul Egyptian!)—hath Arbaces snared me thus, and left me to starve and rot!"

"They accuse the Athenian of murder; canst thou disprove the accusation?"

"Only free me, and the proudest head of Pompeii is not more safe than his. I saw the deed done—I saw Arbaces strike the blow; I can convict the true murderer and acquit the innocent man. But if I perish, he dies also. Dost thou interest thyself for him? Oh, blessed stranger, in my heart is the urn which condemns or frees him!"

"And thou wilt give full evidence of what thou knowest?"

"Will!—Oh! were hell at my feet—yes! Revenge on the false Egyptian—revenge! revenge! revenge!"

As through his ground teeth Calenus shrieked forth those last words, Nydia felt that in his worst passions was her certainty of his justice to the Athenian. Her heart beat: was it—was it to be her proud destiny to preserve her idolized—her adored? "Enough," said she; "the powers that conducted me hither will carry me through all. Yes, I feel that I shall deliver thee. Wait in patience and in hope."

"But be cautious, be prudent, sweet stranger. Attempt not to appeal to Arbaces—he is marble. Seek the prætor—say what thou knowest—obtain his writ of search; bring soldiers, and smiths of cunning—these 'locks are wondrous strong! Time flies—I may starve—starve! if you are not quick! Go—go! Yet stay—it is horrible to be alone—the air is like a charnel—and the scorpions—ha! and the pale larvæ! Oh! stay! stay!"

"Nay," said Nydia, terrified by the terror of the priest, and anxious to confer with herself,— "Nay, for thy sake I must depart. Take hope for thy companion—farewell!"

So saying she glided away, and felt with extended arms along the pillared space until she had gained the farther end of the hall and the mouth of the passage that led to the upper air. But there she paused; she felt that it would be more safe to wait a while until the night was so far blended with morning that the whole house would be buried in sleep, and so that she might quit it unobserved. She therefore once more laid herself down, and counted the weary moments. In her sanguine heart joy was the predominant emotion. Glaucus was in deadly peril—but *she* should save him!

CHAPTER XV.

ARBACES AND IONE—NYDIA GAINS THE GARDEN—WILL SHE ESCAPE AND SAVE THE ATHENIAN?

WHEN Arbaces had warmed his veins by large draughts of that spiced and perfumed wine so valued by the luxurious, he felt more than usually elated and exultant of heart. There is a pride in triumphant ingenuity, not less felt, perhaps, though its object be guilty. Our vain human nature hugs itself in the consciousness of superior craft and self-obtained success—afterward comes the horrible reaction of remorse.

But remorse was not a feeling which Arbaces was likely ever to experience for the fate of the base Calenus. He swept from his remembrance the thought of the priest's agonies and lingering death. He felt only that a great danger was passed, and a possible foe silenced; all left to him now

would be to account to the priesthood for the disappearance of Calenus ; and this he imagined it would not be difficult to do. Calenus had often been employed by him in various religious missions to the neighbouring cities. On some such errand he could now assert that he had been sent, with offerings to the shrines of Isis at Stabiae and Neapolis, placatory of the goddess for the recent murder of her priest, Apæcides. When Calenus had expired, his body might be thrown, previous to the Egyptian's departure from Pompeii, into the deep stream of the Sarnus ; and when discovered, suspicion would probably fall upon the Nazarene atheists, as an act of revenge for the death of Olinthus at the arena. After rapidly running over these plans for screening himself, Arbaces dismissed at once from his mind all recollection of the wretched priest ; and, animated by the success which had lately crowned all his schemes, he surrendered his thoughts to Ione. The last time he had seen her, she had driven him from her presence by a reproachful and bitter scorn, which his arrogant nature was unable to endure. He now felt emboldened once more to renew that interview ; for his passion for her was like similar feelings in other men—it made him restless for her presence, even though in that presence he was exasperated and humbled. From delicacy to her grief, he laid not aside his dark and unfeative robes, but, renewing the perfumes on his raven locks, and arranging his tunic in its most becoming folds, he sought the chamber of the Neapolitan. Accosting the slave in attendance without, he inquired if Ione had yet retired to rest ; and learning that she was still up, and unusually quiet and composed, he ventured into her presence. He found his beautiful ward sitting before a small table, and leaning her face upon both her hands, in the attitude of thought. Yet the expression of the face itself possessed not its wonted bright and Psyche-like expression of sweet intelligence ; the lips were apart—the eye vacant and unheeding—and the long dark hair, falling neglected and dishevelled upon her neck, gave by the contrast additional paleness to a cheek which had already lost the roundness of its contour.

Arbaces gazed upon her a moment ere he advanced. She, too, lifted up her eyes ; and when she saw who was the intruder, shut them with an expression of pain, but did not stir.

"Ah!" said Arbaces, in a low and earnest tone, as he respectfully, nay, humbly, advanced and seated himself at a little distance from the table—"Ah! that my death could remove thy hatred, then would I gladly die! Thou wrongest me, Ione ; but I will bear the wrong without a murmur, only let me see thee sometimes. Chide, reproach, scorn me, if thou wilt—I will learn myself to bear it. And is not even thy bitterest tone sweeter to me than the music of the most artful lute? In thy silence the world seems to stand still—a stagnation curdles up the veins of the earth—there is no earth, no life, without the light of thy countenance and the melody of thy voice."

"Give me back my brother and my betrothed," said Ione, with a calm and imploring tone, and a few large tears rolled unheeded down her cheeks.

"Would that I could restore the one and save the other," returned Arbaces, with apparent emotion. "Yes, to make thee happy, I would renounce my ill-fated love, and gladly join thy hand to the Athenian's. Perhaps he will yet come unscathed from his trial—(Arbaces had prevented her learning that the trial had already commenced ;) if so, thou art free to judge or condemn him thyself. And think not, oh, Ione! that I would follow thee longer with a prayer of love. I know it is in vain. Suffer me only to weep—to mourn with thee. Forgive a violence deeply repented, and what shall offend no more. Let me be to thee only what I once was—a friend, a father, a protector. Ah, Ione! spare me, and forgive."

"I forgive thee. Save but Glaucus, and I will renounce him. Oh,

mighty Arbaces! thou art powerful in evil or in good: save the Athenian, and the poor Ione will never see him more." As she spoke, she rose with weak and trembling limbs, and falling at his feet, she clasped his knees:—

"Oh! if thou really lovest me—if thou art human—remember my father's ashes, remember my childhood, think of all the hours we passed happily together, and save my Glaucus!"

Strange convulsions shook the frame of the Egyptian! his features worked fearfully—he turned his face aside, and said in a hollow voice, "If I could save him, even now, I would; but the Roman law is stern and sharp. Yet if I *could* succeed—if I *could* rescue and set him free—wouldst thou be mine—my bride?"

"Thine!" repeated Ione, rising, "thine—thy bride! My brother's blood is unavenged: who slew him? O, Nemesis! can I even sell, for the life of Glaucus, thy solemn trust? Arbaces—*thine*? Never!"

"Ione, Ione!" cried Arbaces, passionately, "why these mysterious words; why dost thou couple my name with the thought of thy brother's death?"

"My dreams couple it—and dreams are from the gods."

"Vain fantasies all! Is it for a dream that thou wouldst wrong the innocent, and hazard thy sole chance of saving thy lover's life?"

"Hear me!" said Ione, speaking firmly, and with a deliberate and solemn voice: "if Glaucus be saved by thee, I will never be borne to his home a bride. But I cannot master the horror of other rites: I cannot wed with thee. Interrupt me not; but mark me, Arbaces!—if Glaucus die, on that same day I baffle thine arts, and leave to thy love only my dust! Yes,—thou mayst put the knife and the poison from my reach—thou mayst imprison—thou mayst chain me; but the brave soul resolved to escape is never without means. These hands, naked and unarmed though they be, shall tear away the bonds of life. Fetter them, and these lips shall firmly refuse the air. Thou art learned, thou hast read how women have died rather than meet dishonour. If Glaucus perish, I will not unworthily linger behind him. By all the gods of the Heaven, and the ocean, and the earth, I devote myself to death! I have said!"

High, proud, dilating in her stature like one inspired, the air and voice of Ione struck an awe into the breast of her listener.

"Brave heart!" said he, after a short pause, "thou art indeed worthy to be mine. Oh! that I should have dreamed of such a sharer to my high doom, and never found it but in thee. Ione," he continued, rapidly, "dost thou not see that we were born for each other? Canst thou not recognise something kindred to thine own energy—thine own courage—in this high and self-dependent soul? We were formed to unite our sympathies—formed to breathe a new spirit into this hackneyed and gross world—formed for the mighty destinies which my soul, sweeping down the gloom of time, foresees with a prophet's vision. With a resolution equal to thine own, I defy thy threats of an inglorious suicide. I hail thee as my own! Queen of climes undarkened by the eagle's wing, unravaged by his beak, *I bow before thee*, in homage and in awe—but I *claim thee* in worship and in love! Together will we cross the ocean—together will we found our realm; and far-distant ages shall acknowledge the long race of kings born from the marriage bed of Arbaces and Ione!"

"Thou ravest! These mystic declamations are suited rather to some palsied crone selling charms in the market-place, than to the wise Arbaces. Thou hast heard my resolution,—it is fixed as the Fates themselves. Orcus has heard my vow, and it is written in the book of the forgetful Hades. Atone, then, O Arbaces!—atone the past: convert hatred into regard—vengeance into gratitude; preserve one who shall never be thy rival. *These* are acts suited to thy original nature, which gives forth sparks of something high and noble. They weigh in the scales of the kings of death; they turn

the balance on that day when the disembodied soul stands shivering and dismayed between Tartarus and Elysium: they glad the heart in life, better and longer than the reward of a momentary passion. Oh, Arbaces! hear me, and be swayed!"

"Enough, Ione. All that I can do for Glaucus shall be done; but blame me not if I fail. Inquire of my foes, even, if I have not sought, if I do not seek, to turn aside the sentence from his head, and judge me accordingly. Sleep then, Ione. Night wanes; I leave thee to its rest,—and mayst thou have kinder dreams of one who has no existence but in thine."

Without waiting a reply, Arbaces hastily withdrew; afraid, perhaps, to trust himself further to the passionate prayer of Ione, which racked him with jealousy, even while it touched him to compassion. But compassion itself came too late. Had Ione even pledged him her hand as his reward, he could not now—his evidence given—the populace excited—have saved the Athenian. Still made sanguine by his very energy of mind, he threw himself on the chances of the future, and believed he should yet triumph over the woman that had so entangled his passions.

As his attendants assisted to unrobe him for the night, the thought of Nydia flashed across him. He felt it was necessary that Ione should never learn of her lover's phrensy, lest it might excuse his imputed crime: and it was possible that her attendants might inform her that Nydia was under his roof, and she might desire to see her. As this idea crossed him, he turned to one of his freedmen—

"Go, Callias," said he, "forthwith to Sosia, and tell him, that on no pretence is he to suffer the blind slave Nydia out of her chamber. But stay—first seek those on attendance upon my ward, and caution them not to inform her that the blind girl is under my roof. Go—quick!"

The slave hastened to obey. After having discharged his commission with respect to Ione's attendants, he sought the worthy Sosia. He found him not in the little cell which was apportioned for his cubiculum; he called his name aloud, and from Nydia's chamber, close at hand, he heard the voice of Sosia reply,—

"Oh, Callias, is it you that I hear?—the gods be praised! Open the door, I pray you!"

"What!—in the chamber with that young girl, Sosia? *Proh pudor!* Are there not fruits ripe enough on the wall, but what thou must tamper with such green—"

"Name not the little witch!" interrupted Sosia, impatiently; "she will be my ruin!" and he forthwith imparted to Callias the history of the air demon, and the escape of the Thessalian.

"Hang thyself, then, unhappy Sosia! I am just charged from Arbaces with a message to thee—on no account art thou to suffer her, even for a moment, from that chamber!"

"*Me miserum!*" exclaimed the slave. "What can I do?—by this time she may have visited half Pompeii. But to-morrow I will undertake to catch her in her old haunts. Keep but my counsel, dear Callias."

"I will do all that friendship can, consistent with my own safety. But are you sure she has left the house?—she may be hiding here yet."

"How is that possible? She could easily have gained the garden, and the door, as I told thee, was open."

"Nay, not so; for at that very hour thou specifiest, Arbaces was in the garden with the priest Calenus. I went there in search of some herbs for my master's bath to-morrow. I saw the table set out, but the gate I am sure was shut: depend upon it, that Calenus entered by the garden, and naturally closed the door after him."

"But it was not locked."

"Yes; for I myself, angry at a negligence which might expose the

bronzes in the peristyle to the mercy of any robber, turned the key, took it away, and — as I did not see the proper slave to whom to give it, or I should have rated him finely — here it actually is, still in my girdle.”

“Oh, merciful Bacchus! I did not pray to thee in vain, after all. Let us not lose a moment! Let us to the garden instantly — she may yet be there!”

The good-natured Callias consented to assist the slave; and after vainly searching the chambers at hand, and the recesses of the peristyle, they entered the garden.

It was about this time that Nydia had resolved to quit her hiding-place and venture forth on her way. Lightly, tremulously, holding her breath, which ever and anon broke forth in quick convulsive gasps, — now gliding by the flower-wreathed columns that bordered the peristyle, — now darkening the still moonshine that fell over its tessellated centre, — now ascending the terrace of the garden, now gliding amid the gloomy and breathless trees, she gained the fatal door — to find it locked! We have all seen that expression of pain, of uncertainty, of fear, which a sudden disappointment of touch, if I may use the expression, casts over the face of the blind. But what words can paint the intolerable woe, the sinking of the whole heart, which was now visible on the features of the Thessalian! Again and again her small, quivering hands wandered to and fro the inexorable door. Poor thing that thou wert! — in vain had been all thy noble courage, thy innocent craft, thy doublings to escape the hound and huntsman! Within but a few yards from thee, laughing at thy endeavours — thy despair — knowing thou wert now their own, and watching with cruel patience their own moment to seize their prey, — thou art saved from seeing thy pursuers!

“Hush, Callias! — let her go on. Let us see what she will do when she has convinced herself that the door is honest.”

“Look! — she raises her face to the heavens — she mutters — she sinks down despondent! No! — by Pollux, she has some new scheme! She will not resign herself! *Per Jove*, a tough spirit! See, she springs up — she retraces her steps — she thinks of some other chance! I advise thee, Sósia, to delay no longer: seize her ere she quit the garden — now!”

“Ah! runaway! I have thee — eh?” said Sósia, seizing upon the unhappy Nydia.

As a hare’s last human cry in the fangs of the dogs — as the sharp voice of terror uttered by a sleep-walker suddenly awakened — broke the shriek of the blind girl, when she felt the abrupt gripe of her jailer. It was a shriek of such utter agony, such entire despair, that it might have rung hauntingly in your ears for ever. She felt as if the last plank of the sinking Glaucus were torn from his clasp. It had been a suspense of life and death; — and death had now won the game.

“Gods! that cry will alarm the house! Arbaces sleeps full lightly. Gag her!” cried Callias.

“Ah! here is the very napkin with which the young witch conjured away my reason! Come, that’s right; now thou art dumb as well as blind.”

And catching the light weight in his arms, Sósia soon gained the house, and reached the chamber from which Nydia had escaped. There, removing the gag, he left her to a solitude so racked and terrible, that out of Hades its anguish could scarcely be exceeded.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE SORROW OF SOON COMPANION FOR OUR AFFLICTIONS — THE
DUNGEON AND ITS VICTIMS.

It was now late on the third and last day of the trial of Glaucus and Olinthus. A few hours after the court had broken up and judgment been given, a small party of the fashionable youth at Pompeii were assembled round the fastidious board of Lepidus.

"So, Glaucus denies his crime to the last," said Clodius.

"Yes; but the testimony of Arbaces was convincing; he saw the blow given," answered Lepidus.

"What could have been the cause?"

"Why, the priest was a gloomy and sullen fellow. He probably rated Glaucus soundly about his gay life and gaming habits, and ultimately swore he would not consent to his marriage with Ione. High words arose; Glaucus seems to have been full of the passionate god, and struck in sudden exasperation. The excitement of wine, the desperation of abrupt remorse, brought on the delirium under which he suffered for some days; and I can readily imagine, poor fellow! that, yet confused by that delirium, he is even now unconscious of the crime he committed! Such, at least, is the shrewd conjecture of Arbaces, who seems to have been most kind and forbearing in his testimony."

"Yes; he has made himself generally popular by it. But, in consideration of these extenuating circumstances, the senate should have relaxed the sentence."

"And they *would* have done so but for the people: but *they* were outrageous. The priests had spared no pains to excite them; and they imagined — the ferocious brutes! — because Glaucus was a rich man and a gentleman, that he was likely to escape; and therefore they were inveterate against him, and doubly resolved upon his sentence. The senate did not dare refuse to strip him of the rights of citizenship, and so pass judgment of death: though, after all, there was but a majority of three against him. Ho! the Chian!"

"He looks sadly altered; but how composed and fearless!"

"Ay, we shall see if his firmness will last over to-morrow. But what merit in courage, when that atheistical hound Olinthus manifested the same?"

"The blasphemer! Yes," said Lepidus, with pious wrath, "no wonder that one of the decurions was, but two days ago, struck dead by lightning in a serene sky.* The gods feel vengeance against Pompeii while the vile desecrator is alive within its walls."

"Yet so lenient was the senate, that had he but expressed his penitence, and scattered a few grains of incense on the altar of Cybele, he would have been let off. I doubt whether these Nazarenes, had they the state religion, would be as tolerant to us, supposing we had kicked down the image of their deity, blasphemed its rites, and denied its faith."

"They give Glaucus one chance, in consideration of the circumstances: they allow him, against the lion, the use of the same stilus wherewith he smote the priest."

"Hast thou seen the lion? Hast thou looked at his teeth and fangs,

* Pliny says, that immediately before the eruption of Vesuvius, one of the decuriones municipales was — though the heaven was unclouded — struck dead by lightning.

and wilt thou call that a chance? Why, sword and buckler would be mere reed and papyrus against the rush of the mighty beast! No — I think the true mercy has been, not to leave him long in suspense; and it was therefore fortunate for him that our benign laws are slow to pronounce, but swift to execute; and that the games of the amphitheatre had been, by a sort of providence, so long fixed for to-morrow. He who awaits death dies twice."

"As for the atheist," said Clodius, "he is to cope the grim tiger naked-handed. Well, these combats are past betting on. Who will take the odds?" A peal of laughter announced the ridicule of the question.

"Poor Clodius!" said the host; "to lose a friend is something; but to find no one to bet on the chance of his escape is a worse misfortune to thee."

"Why, it is provoking; it would have been some consolation to him and to me to think he was useful to the last."

"The people," said the grave Pansa, "are all delighted with the result. They were so much afraid the sports at the amphitheatre would go off without a criminal for the beasts; and now, to get two such criminals is indeed a joy for the poor fellows! They work hard; they ought to have some amusement."

"There speaks the popular Pansa, who never moves without a string of clients as long as an Indian triumph. He is always prating about the people. Gods! he will end by being a Gracchus!"

"Certainly I am no insolent aristocrat," said Pansa, with a generous air.

"Well," observed Lepidus, "it would have been assuredly dangerous to have been merciful at the eve of a beast-fight. If ever I come to be tried, pray Jupiter there may be either no beasts in the *vivaria*, or plenty of criminals in the jail."

"And pray," said one of the party, "what has become of the poor girl whom Glaucus was to have married? A widow without being a bride—that is hard!"

"Oh," returned Clodius, "she is safe under the protection of her guardian, Arbaces. It was natural she should go to him when she had lost both lover and brother."

"By sweet Venus, Glaucus was fortunate among the women! They say the rich Julia was in love with him."

"A mere fable, my friend," said Clodius, coxcombically; "I was with her to-day. If any feeling of the sort she ever conceived, I flatter myself that I have consoled her."

"Hush, gentlemen!" said Pansa; "do you not know that Clodius is employed at the house of Diomed in blowing hard at the torch? It begins to burn, and will soon shine bright on the shrine of Hymen."

"Is it so?" said Lepidus; "what, Clodius become a married man?—Fy!"

"Never fear," answered Clodius; "old Diomed is delighted at the notion of marrying his daughter to a nobleman, and will come down largely with the *sesterces*. You will see that I shall not lock them up in the atrium. It will be a white day for his jolly friends when Clodius marries an heiress."

"Say you so?" cried Lepidus; "come, then, a full cup to the health of the fair Julia!"

While such was the conversation—one not discordant to the tone of mind common among the dissipated of that day, and which might, perhaps, a century ago, have found an echo in the looser circles of Paris; while such, I say, was the conversation in the gaudy triclinium of Lepidus, far different the scene which scowled before the young Athenian.

After his condemnation, Glaucus was admitted no more to the gentle guardianship of Sallust, the only friend of his distress. He was led along the forum, till the guards stopped at a small door by the side of the temple of Jupiter. You may see the place still. The door opened in the centre in a somewhat singular fashion, revolving round on its hinges, as it were, like a modern turnstile, so as only to leave half the threshold open at the same time. Through this narrow aperture they thrust the prisoner, placed before him a loaf and a pitcher of water, and left him to darkness, and, as he thought, to solitude. So sudden had been that revolution of fortune which had prostrated him from the palmy height of youthful pleasure and successful love, to the lowest abyss of ignominy and the horror of a most bloody death, that he could scarcely convince himself that he was not held in the meshes of some fearful dream. His elastic and glorious frame had triumphed over a potion, the greater part of which he had fortunately not drained. He had recovered sense and consciousness; but still a dim and misty depression clung to his nerves, and darkened his mind. His natural courage, and the Greek nobility of pride, enabled him to vanquish all unbecoming apprehension, and, in the judgment court, to face his awful lot with a steady mien and unquailing eye. But the consciousness of innocence scarcely sufficed to support him when the gaze of men no longer excited his haughty valour, and he was left to loneliness and silence. He felt the damp of the dungeon sink chillingly into his enfeebled frame. He — the fastidious, the luxurious, the refined — he who had hitherto braved no hardship and known no sorrow! — Beautiful bird that he was! why had he left his far and sunny clime — the olive-groves of his native hills — the music of immemorial streams? Why had he wanted on his glittering plumage amid these harsh and ungenial strangers, dazzling the eye with his gorgeous hues, charming the ear with his blithesome song — thus suddenly to be arrested, caged in darkness — a victim and a prey — his gay flights for ever over — his hymns of gladness for ever stilled! The poor Athenian! his very faults the exuberance of a gentle and joyous nature, how little had his past career fitted him for the trials he was destined to undergo! The hoots of the mob, amid whose plaudits he had so often guided his graceful car and bounding steed, still rung gratingly in his ear. The cold and stony faces of his former friends (the co-mates of his merry revels) still rose before his eye. None now were by to sooth, to sustain, the admired, the adulated stranger. These walls opened but on the dread arena of a violent and shameful death. And Ione! of her, too, he had heard naught; no encouraging word, no pitying message; she, too, had forsaken him; she believed him guilty — and of what crime? — the murder of a brother! He ground his teeth — he groaned aloud — and ever a sharp fear shot across him. In that fell and fierce delirium which had so unaccountably seized his soul, which had so ravaged the disordered brain, *might he not*, indeed, unknowing to himself, have committed the crime of which he was accused? Yet, as the thought flashed upon him, it was as suddenly checked; for amid all the darkness of the past, he thought distinctly to recall the dim grove of Cybele, the upward face of the pale dead, the pause that he had made beside the corpse, and the sudden shock that felled him to the earth. He felt convinced of his innocence; and yet who, to the latest time, long after his mangled remains were mingled with the elements, would believe him guiltless, or uphold his fame? As he recalled his interview with Arbaces, and the causes of revenge which had been excited in the heart of that dark and fearful man, he could not but believe that he was the victim of some deep-laid and mysterious snare, the clew and train of which he was lost in attempting to discover: and Ione — Arbaces loved her — might his rival's success be founded upon his ruin? That thought cut him more deeply

than all; and his noble heart was more stung by jealousy than appalled by fear. Again he groaned aloud.

A voice from the recess of the darkness answered that burst of anguish. "Who," it said, "is my companion in this awful hour? Athenian Glaucus, is it thou?"

"So, indeed, they called me in mine hour of fortune; they may have other names for me now. And *thy* name, stranger?"

"Is Olinthus, thy co-mate in the prison as at the trial."

"What! he whom they call the atheist? Is it the injustice of men that hath taught thee to deny the providence of the gods?"

"Alas!" answered Olinthus; "thou, not I, art the true atheist, for thou deniest the sole true God—the Unknown One—to whom thy Athenian fathers erected an altar. It is in this hour that I know my God. He is with me in the dungeon; his smile penetrates the darkness; on the eve of death my heart whispers immortality, and earth recedes from me but to bring the weary soul nearer unto heaven."

"Tell me," said Glaucus, abruptly, "did I not hear thy name coupled with that of Apæcides in my trial? Dost thou believe me guilty?"

"God alone reads the heart; but my suspicion rested not upon thee."

"On whom, then?"

"Thy accuser, Arbaces!"

"Ha! thou cheerest me; and wherefore?"

"Because I know the man's evil breast; and he had cause to fear him who is now dead."

With that Olinthus proceeded to inform Glaucus of those details which the reader already knows—the conversion of Apæcides, the plan they had proposed for the detection of the impostures of the Egyptian priestcraft, and of the seductions practised by Arbaces upon the youthful weakness of the proselyte. "Had, therefore," concluded Olinthus—"had the deceased encountered Arbaces, reviled his treasons, and threatened detection, the place, the hour, might have favoured the wrath of the Egyptian, and passion and craft alike dictated the fatal blow."

"It must have been so!" cried Glaucus, joyfully; "I am happy."

"Yet what, O unfortunate, avails to thee now the discovery? Thou art condemned and fated, and in thine innocence thou wilt perish."

"But I shall *know myself* guiltless; and in my mysterious madness I had fearful, though momentary doubts; yet tell me, man of a strange creed, thinkest thou that for small errors, or for ancestral faults, we are ever abandoned and accursed by the Powers above, whatever name thou allottest to them?"

"God is just, and abandons not his creatures for their mere human frailty. God is merciful, and curses none but the wicked who repent not."

"Yet it seemeth to me as if, in the divine anger, I had been smitten by a sudden madness—a supernatural and solemn phrensy, wrought not by human means."

"There are demons on earth," answered the Nazarene, fearfully, "as well as there are God and his Son in Heaven; and since thou acknowledgest not the last, the first may have had power over thee."

Glaucus did not reply, and there was a silence for some minutes. At length the Athenian said, in a changed, and soft, and half-hesitating voice, "Christian, believest thou, among the doctrines of thy creed, that the dead live again—that they who have loved here are united hereafter—that beyond the grave our good name shines pure from the mortal mists that unjustly dim it in the gross-eyed world—and that the streams which are divided by the desert and the rock meet in the solemn Hades, and flow once more into one?"

"Believe I that, O Athenian? No; I do not believe. I *know*!—and

it is that beautiful and blessed assurance which supports me now. — O Cylene!" continued Olinthus, passionately, "bride of my heart! torn from me in the first month of our nuptials, shall I not see thee yet, and ere many days be past? Welcome, welcome death, that will bring me to Heaven and thee!"

There was something in this sudden burst of human affection which struck a kindred chord on the soul of the Greek. He felt, for the first time, a sympathy greater than mere affliction between him and his companion. He crept nearer towards Olinthus; for the Italians, fierce in some points, were not unnecessarily cruel in others: they spared the separate cell and the superfluous chain, and allowed the victims of the arena the sad comfort of such freedom and such companionship as the prison would afford.

"Yes," continued the Christian, with holy fervour, "the immortality of the soul — the resurrection — the reunion of the dead — is the great principle of our creed — the great truth a God suffered death itself to attest and proclaim. No fabled Elysium — no poetical Orcus; but a pure and radiant heritage of heaven itself, is the portion of the good."

"Tell me, then, thy doctrines, and expound to me thy hopes," said Glaucus, earnestly.

Olinthus was not slow to obey that prayer; and there — as oftentimes in the early ages of the Christian creed — it was in the darkness of the dungeon, and over the approach of death, that the dawning Gospel shed its soft and consecrating rays.

CHAPTER XVII.

A CHANCE FOR GLAUCUS.

THE hours passed in lingering torture over the head of Nydia from the time in which she had been replaced in her cell.

Sosia, as if afraid he should be again outwitted, had refrained from visiting her until late in the morning of the following day, and then he but thrust in the periodical basket of food and wine, and hastily reclosed the door. That day rolled on, and Nydia felt herself pent — barred — inexorably confined, when that day was the judgment-day of Glaucus, and when her release would have saved him! Yet knowing that, almost impossible as seemed her escape, the sole chance for the life of Glaucus rested on her, this young girl, frail, passionate, and acutely susceptible as she was, resolved not to give way to a despair that would disable her from seizing whatever opportunity *might* occur. She kept her senses whenever beneath the whirl of intolerable thought they reeled and tottered; nay, she took food and wine that she might sustain her strength — that she *might be prepared!*

She revolved scheme after scheme of escape, and was forced to dismiss all. Yet Sosia was her only hope, the only instrument with which she could tamper. He had been superstitious in the hope of ascertaining whether he could eventually purchase his freedom. Blessed gods! might he not be won by the bribe of freedom itself? — was she not nearly rich enough to purchase it? Her slender arms were covered with bracelets, the presents of Ione; and on her neck she yet wore that very chain which, it may be remembered, had occasioned her jealous quarrel with Glaucus, and which she had afterward promised vainly to wear for ever. She waited burning till Sosia should again appear; but as hour after hour passed, and he came not, she grew impatient. Every nerve beat with fever; she could endure the solitude no longer — she groaned, she shrieked aloud — she beat herself against the door. Her cries echoed along the hall, and Sosia,

in peevish anger, hastened to see what was the matter, and silence his prisoner if possible.

"Ho! ho! what is this?" said he, surlily. "Young slave, if thou screamest out thus we must gag thee. My shoulders will smart for it if thou art heard by my master."

"Kind Sosia, chide me not — I cannot endure to be so long alone," answered Nydia; "the solitude appals me. Sit with me, I pray, a little while. Nay, fear not that I should attempt to escape; place thy seat before the door — keep thine eye on me — I will not stir from this spot."

Sosia, who was a considerable gossip himself, was moved by this address. He pitied one who had nobody to talk with — it was his case too; he pitied, — and resolved to relieve *himself*! He took the hint of Nydia, placed a stool before the door, leaned his back against it, and replied —

"I am sure I do not wish to be churlish; and so far as a little innocent chat goes, I have no objection to indulge you. But mind, no tricks — no more conjuring."

"No, no; tell me, dear Sosia, what is the hour?"

"It is already evening — the goats are going home."

"Oh gods! How went the trial?"

"Both condemned!"

Nydia repressed the shriek. "Well — well, I thought it would be so. When do they suffer?"

"To-morrow, in the amphitheatre: if it were not for thee, little wretch! I should be allowed to go with the rest and see it."

Nydia leaned back for some moments — nature could endure no more — she had fainted away. But Sosia did not perceive it, for it was the dusk of eve, and he was full of his own privations; he went on lamenting the loss of so delightful a show, and accusing the injustice of Arbaces for singling him out from all his fellows to be converted into a jailer; and ere he had half finished, Nydia, with a deep sigh, recovered the sense of life.

"Thou sighest, blind one, at my loss! well, that is some comfort; so long as you acknowledge how much you cost me, I will endeavour not to grumble — it's hard to be ill-treated and yet not pitied."

"Sosia, how much dost thou require to make up the purchase of thy freedom?"

"How much? — why about two thousand sesterces."

"The gods be praised! not more? Seest thou these bracelets and this chain — they are well worth double that sum. I will give them thee if —?"

"Tempt me not; I cannot release thee: Arbaces is a severe and awful master. Who knows but I might feed the fishes of the Sarnus? Alas! all the sesterces in the world would not buy me back into life. Better a live dog than a dead lion."

"Sosia, thy freedom! Think well; if thou wilt let me out — only for one little hour! — let me out at midnight, I will return ere to-morrow's dawn; nay, thou canst go with me."

"No," said Sosia, sturdily; "a slave once disobeyed Arbaces, and he was never more heard of."

"But the law gives a master no power over the life of his slave."

"The law is very obliging, but more polite than efficient: I know that Arbaces always gets the law on his side. Besides, if I am once dead, what law can bring me to life again?"

Nydia wrung her hands. "Is there no hope, then?" said she, convulsively.

"None of escape, till Arbaces give the word."

"Well, then," said Nydia, quickly, "thou wilt not at least refuse to take a letter for me; thy master cannot kill thee for that."

"To whom?"

"The prætor."

"To a magistrate?—no! Not I—I should be made a witness in court, for what I know; and the way they cross-examine a slave is by the torture."

"Pardon; I meant not the prætor—it was a word that escaped me unawares; I meant quite another person—the gay Sallust."

"Oh! and what want you with him?"

"Glaucus was my master; he purchased me from a cruel lord; he alone has been kind to me; he is to die. I shall never live happily if I cannot, in his hour of trial and doom, let him know that one heart is grateful to him. Sallust is his friend—he will convey my message."

"I am sure he will do no such thing. Glaucus will have enough to think of between this and to-morrow, without troubling his head about a blind girl."

"Man," said Nydia, rising, "wilt thou become free?—thou hast the offer in thy power; to-morrow it will be too late. Never was freedom more cheaply purchased: thou canst easily and unmissed leave home; less than half an hour will suffice for thine absence. And for such a trifle wilt thou refuse liberty?"

Sosia was greatly moved. It was true, the request was remarkably silly; but what was that to him? So much the better; he could lock the door on Nydia; and, if Arbaces should learn his absence, the offence was venial, and would merit but a reprimand. Yet, should Nydia's letter contain something more than what she had said—should it speak of her imprisonment, as he shrewdly conjectured it would do—what then? It need never be known to Arbaces that *he* had carried the letter. At the worst, the bribe was enormous; the risk light; the temptation irresistible. He hesitated no longer—he assented to the proposal.

"Give me the trinkets, and I will take the letter: yet stay—thou art a slave—thou hast no right to these ornaments—they are thy master's."

"They were the gifts of Glaucus; he is my master; what chance hath he to claim them? who else will know that they are in my possession?"

"Enough—I will bring thee the papyrus."

In a few minutes Nydia had concluded her letter, which she took the precaution to write in Greek, the language of her childhood, and which almost every Italian of the higher ranks was then supposed to know. She carefully wound round the epistle the protecting thread, and covered its knot with wax; and ere she placed it in the hands of Sosia, she thus addressed him:

"Sosia, I am blind and in prison; thou mayst think to deceive me; thou mayst pretend only to take this letter to Sallust; thou mayst not fulfil thy charge. But here I solemnly dedicate thy head to vengeance—thy soul to the infernal powers—if thou wrongest thy trust; and I call upon thee to place thy right hand of faith in mine, and repeat after me these words—'By the ground on which we stand! by the elements which contain life and can curse life! by Orcus, the all-avenging! by the Olympian Jupiter, the all-seeing!—I swear that I will honestly discharge my trust, and faithfully deliver into the hands of Sallust this letter. And if I perjure myself in this oath, may the full curses of heaven and hell be wreaked upon me!'—Enough—I trust thee; take thy reward. It is already dark—depart at once."

"Thou art a strange girl, and thou hast frightened me terribly; but it is all very natural; and if Sallust is to be found, I give him this letter as I have sworn. By my faith, I may have my little peccadilloes; but perjury—no! I leave *that* to my betters."

With this Sosia withdrew, carefully passing athwart Nydia's door the heavy bolt—carefully locking its wards; and hanging the key to his girdle,

he retired to his own den, enveloped himself from head to foot in a huge disguising cloak, and slipped out by the back way undisturbed and unseen.

The streets were thin and empty—he soon gained the house of Sallust. The porter bade him leave his letter and be gone; for Sallust was so grieved at the condemnation of Glaucus, that he could not on any account be disturbed.

“Nevertheless, I have sworn to give this letter into his own hands, do so I must;” and Sosia, well knowing by experience that Cerberus loves a sop, thrust some half a dozen sesterces into the hand of the porter.

“Well, well,” said the last, relenting, “you may enter if you will; but to tell you the truth, Sallust is drinking himself out of his grief. It is his way when any thing disturbs him. He orders a capital supper, the best wine, and does not give over till every thing is out of his head—but the liquor.”

“An excellent plan—excellent! Ah, what it is to be rich! If I were Sallust, I would have some grief or another every day. But just say a kind word for me with the atriensis—I see him coming.”

Sallust was too sad to receive company. He was too sad also to drink alone; so, as was his wont, he admitted his favourite freedman to his entertainment, and a stranger banquet never was held. For ever and anon the kind-hearted epicure sighed, whimpered, wept outright, and then turned with double zest to some new dish, or his refilled goblet.

“My good fellow,” said he to his companion, “it was a most awful judgment—heighho—it is not bad that kid, eh? Poor, dear Glaucus!—what a jaw the lion has, too! Ah, ah, ah!”

And Sallust sobbed loudly—the fit was stopped by a counteraction of hiccups.

“Take a cup of wine,” said the freedman.

“A thought too cold; but then how cold Glaucus must be! Shut up the house to-morrow—not a slave shall stir forth—none of my people shall honour that cursed arena—No, no!”

“A cup of wine—your grief distracts you. By the gods it does!—a piece of that cheesecake.”

It was at this auspicious moment that Sosia was admitted to the presence of the disconsolate carouser.

“Ho!—what art thou?”

“Merely a messenger to Sallust. I give him this billet, from a young lady. There is no answer that I know of. May I withdraw?”

“Thus said the discreet Sosia, keeping his face muffled in his cloak, and speaking with a feigned voice, so that he might not hereafter be recognised.

“By the gods—a pimp! Unfeeling wretch—do you not see my sorrows! Go!—and the curses of Pandarus with you!”

Sosia lost not a moment in retiring.

“Will you read the letter, Sallust?” said the freedman.

“Letter!—which letter!” said the epicure, reeling, for he began to see double. “A curse on these wenches, say I! Am I a man to think of—(hiccup)—pleasure, when—when—my friend is going to be eat up!”

“Eat another tartlet!”

“No, no! My grief chokes me!”

“Take him to bed,” said the freedman: and Sallust’s head now declining fairly on his breast, they bore him off to his cubiculum, still muttering lamentations for Glaucus, and imprecations on the unfeeling invitations of ladies of pleasure.

Meanwhile Sosia strode indignantly homeward.—“Pimp, indeed!” quoth he to himself: “pimp! a scurvy-tongued fellow that Sallust! Had I been called knave or thief, I could have forgiven it; but pimp! Faugh! there

is something in the word which the toughest stomach in the world would rise against. A knave is a knave for his own pleasure, and a thief is a thief for his own profit; and there is something honourable and philosophical in being a rascal for one's own sake: that is doing things upon principle—upon a grand scale. But a pimp is a thing that defiles itself for another! a pipkin, that is put on the fire for another man's pottage! a napkin, that every guest wipes his hands upon! and the scullion says, 'By your leave' to! A pimp! I would rather he had called me parricide! But the man was drunk, and did not know what he said; and, besides, I disguised myself. Had he seen it had been Sosia who addressed him, it would have been 'honest Sosia!' and 'worthy man!' I warrant. Nevertheless, the trinkets have been won easily—that's some comfort; and, O goddess Feronia! I shall be a freeman soon! and then I should like to see who'll call me pimp!—unless, indeed, he pay me pretty handsomely for it!"

While Sosia was soliloquizing in this high-minded and generous vein, his path lay along a narrow lane that led towards the amphitheatre and its adjacent palaces. Suddenly, as he turned a sharp corner, he found himself in the midst of a considerable crowd. Men, women, and children, all were hurrying on, laughing, talking, gesticulating; and ere he was aware of it, the worthy Sosia was borne away with the noisy stream.

"What now?" he asked of his nearest neighbour, a young artificer; "what now? Where are all these good folks thronging? Does any rich patron give away alms or viands to-night?"

"Not so, man—better still," said the artificer; "the noble Pansa—the people's friend—has granted the public leave to see the beasts in their *vicinia*. By Hercules! they will not be seen so safely by some persons to-morrow!"

"'Tis a pretty sight," said the slave, yielding to the throng that impelled him onward; "and since I may not go to the sports to-morrow, I may as well take a peep at the beasts to-night."

"You will do well," returned his new acquaintance; "a lion and a tiger are not to be seen at Pompeii every day."

The crowd had now entered a broken and wide space of ground, on which, as it was only lighted scantily and from a distance, the press became dangerous to those whose limbs and shoulders were not fitted for a mob. Nevertheless, the women especially—many of them with children in their arms, or even at the breast—were the most resolute in forcing their way; and their shrill exclamations of complaint or objurgation were heard loud above the more jovial and masculine voices. Yet amid them was a young and girlish voice, that appeared to come from one too happy in her excitement to be alive to the inconvenience of the crowd.

"Aha! cried the young woman, to some of her companions, "I always told you so; I always said we should have a man for the lion; and now we have one for the tiger, too! I wish to-morrow were come!"

"Ho! ho! for the merry, merry show,
With a forest of faces in every row!
Lo! the swordsmen, bold as the son of Alcmena,
Sweep, side by side, o'er the hushed arena;
Talk while you may, you will hold your breath
When they meet in the grasp of the glowing death!
Tramp, tramp, how gayly they go!
Ho! ho! for the merry, merry show!"

"A jolly girl!" said Sosia.

"Yes," replied the young artificer, a curly-headed, handsome youth; "yes!" replied he, enviously; "the women love a gladiator. If I had been a slave, I would have soon found my schoolmaster in the *lanista*!"

"Would you, indeed!" said Sosia, with a sneer. "People's notions differ!"

The crowd had now arrived at the place of destination; but as the cell in which the wild beasts were confined was extremely small and narrow, tenfold more vehement than it hitherto had been was the rush and press of the aspirants to obtain admittance. Two of the officers of the amphitheatre, placed at the entrance, very wisely mitigated the evil by dispensing to the foremost only a limited number of tickets at a time, and admitting no new visitors till their predecessors had sated their curiosity. Sosia, who was a tolerably stout fellow, and not troubled with any remarkable scruples of diffidence or good breeding, contrived to be among the first of the initiated.

Separated from his companion the artificer, Sosia found himself in a narrow cell of oppressive heat and atmosphere, and lighted by several rank and flaring torches.

The animals, usually kept in different vivaria, or dens, were now, for the greater entertainment of the visitors, placed in one, but equally indeed divided from each other by strong cages, protected by iron bars.

There they were, the fell and grim wanderers of the desert—who have now become almost the principal heroes or agents of this story! The lion, who, as being more gentle by nature than his fellow beast, had been more incited to ferocity by hunger, stalked restlessly and fiercely to and fro his narrow confines: his eyes were lurid with rage and famine; and as every now and then he paused, and glared around, the spectators fearfully pressed backward, and drew their breath more quickly. But the tiger lay quiet, and extended at full length in his cage, and only by an occasional play of his tail, or a long impatient yawn, testified any emotion at his confinement, or at the crowd which honoured him with their presence.

"I have seen no fiercer beast than yon lion, even in the amphitheatre of Rome," said a gigantic and sinewy fellow, who stood at the right hand of Sosia.

"I feel humbled when I look at his limbs," replied, at the left of Sosia, a slighter and younger figure, with his arms folded on his breast.

The slave looked first at one, and then at the other. "*Virtus in medio!*—Virtue is ever in the middle," muttered he to himself; "a goodly neighbourhood for thee, Sosia—a gladiator on each side!"

"That is well said, Lydon," returned the huger gladiator; "I feel the same."

"And to think," observed Lydon, in a tone of deep feeling, "to think that the noble Greek, he whom we saw but a day or two since before us, so full of youth, and health, and joyousness, is to feast yon monster!"

"Why not?" growled Niger savagely; "many an honest gladiator has been compelled to a like combat by the emperor—why not a wealthy murderer by the law?"

Lydon sighed, shrugged his shoulders, and remained silent. Meanwhile the common gazers listened with staring eyes and lips apart; the gladiators were objects of interest as well as the beasts—they were animals of the same species; so the crowd glanced from one to the other—the men and the brutes;—whispering their comments and anticipating the morrow.

"Well!" said Lydon, turning away, "I thank the gods that it is not the lion or the tiger I am to contend with; even you, Niger, are a gentler combatant than they."

"But equally dangerous," said the gladiator, with a fierce laugh; and the bystanders, admiring his vast limbs and ferocious countenance, grinned too.

"That as it may be," answered Lydon, carelessly, as he pressed through the throng and quitted the den.

"I may as well take advantage of his shoulders," thought the prudent

Sosia, hastening to follow him; "the crowd always give way to a gladiator; so I will keep close behind, and come in for a share of his consequence."

The son of Medon strode quickly through the mob, many of whom recognised his features and profession.

"That is young Lydon, a brave fellow; he fights to-morrow," said one.

"Ah! I have a bet on him," said another; "see how firmly he walks!"

"Good luck to thee, Lydon!" said a third.

"Lydon, you have my wishes!" half-whispered a fourth, smiling — (a comely woman of the middle classes) — "and if you win, why, you may hear more of me."

"A handsome man, by Venus!" cried a fifth, who was a girl scarce in her teens. "Thank you," returned Sosia, gravely taking the compliment to himself.

However strong the purer motives of Lydon, and certain though it be that he would never have entered so bloody a calling but from the hope of obtaining his father's freedom, he was not altogether unmoved by the notice he excited. He forgot that the voices now raised in commendation might, on the morrow, be shouting over his death pangs. Fierce and reckless, as well as generous and warm-hearted by nature, he was already imbued with the pride of a profession that he fancied he disdained, and affected by the influence of a companionship that in reality he loathed. He saw himself now a man of importance; his steps grew yet lighter, and his mien more elate.

"Niger," said he, turning suddenly as he had now thriddled the crowd, "we have often quarrelled; we are not matched against each other, but one of us, at least, may reasonably expect to fall; give us thy hand."

"Most readily," said Sosia, extending his palm.

"Ha! what fool is this? why, I thought Niger was at my heels!"

"I forgive the mistake," replied Sosia, condescendingly; "do n't mention it; the error was easy — I and Niger are somewhat of the same build!"

"Ha! ha! that is excellent! Niger would have slit thy throat had he heard thee!"

"You gentlemen of the arena have a most disagreeable mode of talking," said Sosia; "let us change the conversation."

"*Vah! vah!*" said Lydon, impatiently; "I am in no humour to converse with thee!"

"Why, truly," returned the slave, "you must have serious thoughts enough to occupy your mind; to-morrow is, I think, your first essay in the arena. Well, I am sure you will die bravely!"

"May thy words fall on thine own head!" said Lydon, superstitiously, for he by no means liked the blessing of Sosia. "*Die!* No — I trust my hour is not yet come!"

"He who plays at dice with death must expect the dog's throw," replied Sosia, maliciously; "but you are a strong fellow, and I wish you all imaginable luck, and so *vale!*"

With that the slave turned on his heel, and took his way homeward.

"I trust the rogue's words were not ominous," said Lydon, musingly. "In my zeal for my father's liberty, and my confidence in my own thews and sinews, I have not contemplated the possibility of death. My poor father! I am thy only son! — If I were to fall —"

As the thought crossed him, the gladiator strode on with a more rapid and restless pace, when suddenly, in an opposite street, he beheld the very object of his thoughts. Leaning on his stick, his form bent by care and age, his eyes downcast, and his steps trembling, the gray-haired Medon slowly approached towards the gladiator. Lydon paused a moment; he divined at once the cause that brought forth the old man at that late hour.

"Be sure, it is I whom he seeks," thought he; "he is horror-struck at

the condemnation of Olinthus — he more than ever esteems the arena criminal and hateful — he comes again to dissuade me from the contest. I must shun him — I cannot brook his prayers — his tears !”

These thoughts, so long to recite, flashed across the young man like lightning. He turned abruptly, and fled swiftly in an opposite direction. He paused not till, almost spent and breathless, he found himself on the summit of a small acclivity which overlooked the most gay and splendid part of that miniature city ; and as he there paused, and gazed along the tranquil streets, glittering in the rays of the moon (which had just arisen, and brought partially and picturesquely into light the crowd around the amphitheatre, at a distance, murmuring, and swaying to and fro), the influence of the scene affected him, rude and unimaginative though his nature. He sat himself down to rest upon the steps of a deserted portico, and felt the calm of the hour quiet and restore him. Opposite, and near at hand, the lights gleamed from a palace, in which the master now held his revels. The doors were open for coolness, and the gladiator beheld the numerous and festive group gathered round the tables in the atrium ;* while behind them, closing the long vista of the illumined rooms beyond, the spray of the distant fountain sparkled in the moonbeams. There were the garlands wreathed round the columns of the hall — there gleamed still and frequent the marble statue — there, amid peals of jocund laughter, rose the music and the lay.

EPICUREAN SONG.

Away with your stories of Hades,
Which the Flamen has forged to affright us ;
We laugh at your three Maiden Ladies,
Your Fates, and your sullen Cocytus.

Poor Jove has a troublesome life, sir,
Could we credit your tales of his portals,
In shutting his ears on his wife, sir,
And opening his eyes upon mortals.

Oh, bless'd be thy name, Epicurus !
Who taught us to laugh at such fables ;
When on Hades they wanted to moor us,
Thy hand cut the terrible cables.

If there be then a Jove or a Juno,
They vex not their heads about us, man ;
Leave the gods to themselves — I and you know
’T is the life of a god to live *thus*, man !

What, think you the gods place their bliss — eh ? —
In playing the spy on a sinner ?
In counting the girls that we kiss — eh ?
Or the cups that we empty at dinner ?

Rest content with the soft lips that love us,
This music, this wine, and this mirth, boys !
Let the gods go to sleep up above us, —
We know there’s no god for this earth, boys !

While Lydon’s piety (which, accommodating as it might be, was in no slight degree disturbed by these verses, which embodied the fashionable philosophy of the day) slowly recovered itself from the shock it had received, a small party of men, in plain garments and of the middle class, passed by

* In the *atrium*, as I have elsewhere observed, a larger party of guests than ordinary was frequently entertained.

his resting-place. They were in earnest conversation, and did not seem to notice or heed the gladiator as they moved on.

"O, horror on horrors!" said one; "Olinthus is snatched from us! our right arm is lopped away! When will Christ descend to protect his own?"

"Can human atrocity go further?" said another; "to sentence an innocent man to the same arena as a murderer! But let us not despair: the thunder of Sinai may yet be heard, and the Lord preserve his saint. 'The fool has said in his heart, There is no God.'"

At that moment out broke again, from the illumined palace, the burden of the revellers' song.

Let the gods go to sleep up above us,—
We know there's no god for this earth, boys! (a)

Ere the words died away, the Nazarenes, moved by sudden indignation, caught up the echo, and, in the words of one of their favourite hymns, shouted aloud:—

Around—about—for ever near thee,
God—our God—shall mark and hear thee!
On his car of storm he sweeps!
Bow, ye heavens, and shrink, ye deeps!
Wo to the proud ones who defy him!
Wo to the dreamers who deny him!
Wo to the wicked, who!

(a) "Let the gods go to sleep up above us,—
We know there's no god for this earth, boys!"

The doctrines of Epicurus himself are pure and simple. Far from denying the existence of divine powers, Velieus (the defender and explainer of his philosophy in Cicero's dialogue on the Nature of the Gods) asserts, "that Epicurus was the first who saw that there were gods, from the impression which Nature herself makes on the minds of all men." He imagined the belief of the Deity to be an innate or antecedent notion (*πρὸ φύσεως*) of the mind—a doctrine of which modern metaphysicians (certainly not Epicurians) have largely availed themselves! He believed that worship was due to the divine powers from the veneration which felicity and excellence command, and not from any dread of their vengeance, or awe of their power: a sublime and fearless philosophy, suitable perhaps to half a dozen great and refined spirits, but which would present no check to the passions of the mass of mankind. According to him, the gods were far too agreeably employed in contemplating their own happiness, to trouble their heads about the sorrows and the joys, the quarrels and the cares, the petty and transitory affairs of man. For this earth they were unsympathizing abstractions:—

"Wrapt up in majesty divine,
Can they regard on what we dine?"

Cotta, who, in the dialogue referred to, attacks the philosophy of Epicurus with great pleasantry, and considerable, though not uniform success, draws this evident and practical corollary, from the theory that asserts the non-interference of the gods. "How," says he, "can there be sanctity, if the gods regard not human affairs?—If the Deity show no benevolence to man, let us dismiss him at once. Why should I entreat him to be propitious? He cannot be propitious,—since, according to you, favour and benevolence are only the effects of imbecility." Cotta, indeed, quotes from Posidonius (*De Natura Deorum*.) to prove that Epicurus did not really believe in the existence of a God; but that his concession of a being wholly nugatory was merely a precaution against accusations of atheism. "Epicurus could not be such a fool," says Cotta, "as sincerely to believe that a Deity has the members of a man without the power to use them; a *thin pellucidity*, regarding no one, and doing nothing." And, whether this be true or false concerning Epicurus, it is certain that, to all effects and purposes, his later disciples were but refining atheists. The sentiments uttered in the song in the text are precisely those professed in sober prose by the graceful philosophers of the Garden, who, as they had wholly perverted the morals of Epicurus, which are at once pure and practical, found it a much easier task to corrupt his metaphysics, which are equally dangerous and visionary. And indeed the two last verses of the song incorporate the very creed that Epicurus himself acknowledged. They are the marrow of his theole

The proud Stars shall fail,
 The Sun shall grow pale,
 The Heaven shrivel up like a scroll:
 Hell's ocean shall bare
 Its depths of despair;
 Each wave an eternal soul!
 For the only thing then,
 That shall not live again,
 Is the corpse of the giant TIME!

Hark, the trumpet of thunder:
 Lo! Earth rent asunder!
 And forth on his angel-throne,
 He comes through the gloom,
 The Judge of the Tomb,
 To summon and save his own!
 O joy to care, and wo to crime!
 He comes to save his own.

Wo ye from whom the flaming sword
 Shall part the chosen of the Lord:
 Wo to the proud ones who defy him!
 Wo to the dreamers who deny him!
 Wo to the wicked, wo!

A sudden silence from the startled hall of revel succeeded these ominous words; the Christians swept on, and were soon hidden from the sight of the gladiator. Awed, he scarce knew why, by the mystic denunciations of the Christians, Lydon, after a short pause, now rose to pursue his way homeward.

Before him, how serenely slept the starlight on that lovely city! how breathlessly its pillared streets reposed in their security! how softly rippled the dark-green waves beyond! how cloudless, spread aloft and blue, the dreaming Campanian skies! Yet this was the last night for the gay Pompeii! the colony of the hoar Chaldean! the fabled city of Hercules! the delight of the voluptuous Roman! Age after age had rolled, indestructive, unheeded, over its head; and now the last ray quivered on the dial-plate of its doom! The gladiator heard some light steps behind—a group of females were wending homeward from their visit to the amphitheatre. As he turned, his eye was arrested by a strange and sudden apparition. From the summit of Vesuvius, darkly visible at the distance, there shot a pale meteoric, livid light,—it trembled an instant and was gone. And at the same instant that his eye caught it, the voice of one of the youngest of the women broke out hilariously and shrill:—

“TRAMP, TRAMP! HOW GAYLY THEY GO!
 HO, HO! FOR THE MORROW'S MERRY SHOW!”

BOOK V.

Stat ecce ad aras hostia, expectat manum
Cervice pronâ.—*SENEC.*

Mutatus ordo est — sede nil propriâ jacet,
Sed acta retro cuncta. — *IBID.*

Tempore quanquam illo telus quoque, et æquora ponti,
Signa dabant. — *VIRGIL, Georgic. lib. i.*

CHAPTER I.

THE DREAM OF ARBACES—A VISITER AND A WARNING TO THE EGYPTIAN.

THE awful night preceding the fierce joy of the amphitheatre rolled drearily away, and grayly broke forth the dawn of THE LAST DAY OF POMPEII! The air was uncommonly calm and sultry—a thin and dull mist gathered over the valleys and hollows of the broad Campanian fields. But yet it was remarked in surprise by the early fisherman, that, despite the exceeding stillness of the atmosphere, the waves of the sea were agitated, and seemed, as it were, to run disturbedly back from the shore; while along the blue and stately Sarnus, whose ancient breadth of channel the traveller now vainly seeks to discover, there crept a hoarse and sullen murmur, as it glided by the laughing plains and gaudy villas of the wealthy citizens. Clear above the low mist rose the time-worn towers of the immemorial town, the red-tiled roofs of the bright streets, the solemn columns of many temples, and the statue-crowned portals of the forum and the arch of triumph. Far in the distance, the outline of the circling hills soared above the vapours, and mingled with the changeful hues of the morning sky. The cloud that had so long rested over the crest of Vesuvius had suddenly vanished, and its rugged and haughty brow looked without a frown over the beautiful scenes below.

Despite the earliness of the immature hour, the gates of the city were opened. Horseman upon horseman, vehicle after vehicle, poured rapidly in; and the voices of numerous pedestrian groups, clad in holyday attire, rose high in joyous and excited merriment; the streets were crowded with citizens and strangers from the populous neighbourhood of Pompeii; and noisily,—fast,—confusedly, swept the many streams of life towards the fatal circus.

Despite the vast size of the amphitheatre, seemingly so disproportioned to the extent of the city, and formed to include nearly all the population of Pompeii itself, so great, on extraordinary occasions, was the concourse of strangers from all parts of Campania, that the space before it was usually crowded for several hours previous to the commencement of the sports, by such persons as were not entitled by their rank to appointed and special seats. And the intense curiosity which the trial and sentence of two criminals so remarkable had occasioned, increased the crowd on this day to an extent wholly unprecedented.

While the common people, with the lively vehemence of their Campanian blood, were thus pushing—scrambling—hurrying—on, yet, amid all their eagerness, preserving, as is now the wont with Italians in such meetings, a wonderful order—and unquarrelsome good humour—a strange visitor to Arbaces was thridding her way to his sequestered mansion. At the sight of her quaint and primeval garb—of her wild gait and gestures—the passengers she encountered touched each other and smiled; but, as they caught a glimpse of her countenance, the mirth was hushed at once, for the face was as the face of the dead; and, what with the ghastly features and obsolete robes of the stranger, it seemed as if one long entombed had risen once more among the living. In silence and awe each group gave way as she passed along, and she soon gained the broad porch of the Egyptian's palace.

The black porter, like the rest of the world, astir at an unusual hour, started as he opened the door to her summons.

The sleep of the Egyptian had been unusually profound during the night; but, as the dawn approached, it was disturbed by strange and unquiet dreams, which impressed him the more as they were coloured by the peculiar philosophy he embraced.

He thought that he was transported to the bowels of the earth, and that he stood alone in a mighty cavern, supported by enormous columns of rough and primeval rock, lost as they ascended in the vastness of a shadow, athwart whose eternal darkness no beam of day had ever glanced. And in the space between these columns were huge wheels, that whirled round and round unceasingly, and with a rushing and roaring noise. Only to the right and left extremities of the cavern, the space between the pillars was left bare, and the apertures stretched away into galleries—not wholly dark, but dimly lighted by wandering and erratic fires, that, meteor-like, now crept (as the snake creeps) along the rugged and dank soil, and now leaped fiercely to and fro, darting across the vast gloom in wild gambols—suddenly disappearing, and as suddenly bursting into tenfold brilliancy and power. And while he gazed wonderingly upon the gallery to the left, thin, mist-like, aerial shapes passed slowly up; and when they had gained the hall they seemed to rise aloft, and to vanish, as the smoke vanishes, in the measureless ascent.

He turned in fear towards the opposite extremity,—and behold! there came swiftly from the gloom above similar shadows, and swept hurriedly along the gallery to the right, as if borne involuntarily adown the tides of some invisible stream; and the faces of these spectres were more distinct than those that emerged from the opposite passage; and on some was joy, and on others sorrow—some were vivid with expectation and hope, some unutterably dejected by awe and horror. And so they passed swift and constantly on, till the eyes of the gazer grew dizzy and blinded with the whirl of an ever-varying succession of things, impelled by a power apparently not their own.

Arbaces turned away; and, in the recess of the hall, he saw the mighty form of a giantess seated upon a pile of skulls, and her hands were busy upon a pale and shadowy woof; and he saw that the woof communicated with the numberless wheels, as if it guided the machinery of their movements. He thought his feet, by some secret agency, were impelled towards the female, and that he was borne onwards till he stood before her, face to face. The countenance of the giantess was solemn, and hushed, and beautifully serene. It was as the face of some colossal sculpture of his own ancestral sphinx. No passion—no human emotion disturbed its brooding and unwrinkled brow; there was neither sadness, nor joy, nor memory, nor hope—it was free from all with which the wild human heart can sym-

pathize. The mystery of mysteries rested on its beauty,—it awed, but terrified not; it was the Incarnation of the Sublime. And Arbaces felt the voice leave his lips, without an impulse of his own; and the voice asked,

“Who art thou, and what is thy task?”

“I am that which thou hast acknowledged,” answered, without desisting from its work, the mighty phantom. “My name is NATURE! These are the wheels of the world, and my hand guides them for the life of all things.”

“And what,” said the voice of Arbaces, “are these galleries, that, strangely and fitfully illumined, stretch on either hand into the abyss of gloom?”

“That,” answered the giant-mother, “which thou beholdest to the left, is the gallery of the unborn. The shadows that flit onward and upward into the world are the souls that come—whither ye may not know—from the long eternity of being to their destined pilgrimage on earth. That which thou beholdest to thy right, whence the shadows descending from above sweep on, equally unknown and dim, is the gallery of the dead!”

“And wherefore,” said the voice of Arbaces, “yest wandering lights that so wildly break the darkness, but only break, not reveal?”

“Dark fool of the human sciences! dreamer of the stars, and would-be decipherer of the heart and origin of things! those lights are but the glimmerings of such knowledge as is vouchsafed to Nature, to work her way, to trace enough of the past and future to give providence to her designs. Judge, then, puppet as thou art, what lights are reserved for thee!”

Arbaces felt himself tremble as he asked again, “Wherefore am I here?”

“It is the forecast of thy soul—the prescience of thy rushing doom—the shadow of thy fate lengthening into eternity as it declines from earth.”

Ere he could answer, Arbaces felt a rushing wind sweep down the cavern as the wings of a giant god. Borne aloft from the ground, and whirled on high as a leaf in the storms of autumn, he beheld himself in the midst of the spectres of the dead, and hurrying with them along the length of gloom. As in vain and impotent despair he struggled against the impelling power, he thought the wind grew into something like a shape—a spectral outline of the wings and talons of an eagle, with limbs floating far and indistinctly along the air, and eyes that, alone clearly and vividly seen, glared stonily and remorselessly on his own.

“What art thou?” again said the voice of the Egyptian.

“I am that which thou hast acknowledged,” and the spectre laughed aloud—“and my name is Necessity.”

“To what dost thou bear me?”

“To the Unknown.”

“To happiness or to woe?”

“As thou hast sown, so shalt thou reap.”

“Dread thing, not so! If thou art the ruler of life, *these* are my misdeeds, not mine.”

“I am but the breath of God!” answered the mighty wind.

“Then is my wisdom vain!” groaned the dreamer.

“The husbandman accuses not fate, when, having sown thistles, he reaps not corn. Thou hast sown crime, accuse not fate if thou reapest not the harvest of virtue.”

The scene suddenly changed. Arbaces was in a place of human bones! and lo! in the midst of them was a skull, and the skull, still retaining its fleshless hollows, assumed slowly, and in the mysterious confusion of a dream, the face of Apocides; and forth from the grinning jaws there crept a small worm, and it crawled to the feet of Arbaces. He attempted to stamp on it, and crush it; but it became longer and larger with that attempt. It swelled and bloated till it grew into a vast serpent; it coiled itself round the limbs of Arbaces; it crunched his bones; it raised its glaring eyes and

poisonous jaws to his face. He writhed in vain ; he withered — he gasped — beneath the influence of the blighting breath — he felt himself blasted into death. And then a voice came from the reptile, which still bore the face of Apæcides, and rang in his reeling ear —

“ THY VICTIM IS THY JUDGE ! THE WORM THOU WOULDST CRUSH BECOMES THE SERPENT THAT DEVOURS THEE ! ”

With a shriek of wrath, and wo, and despairing resistance, Arbaces awoke — his hair on end — his brow bathed in dew — his eyes glazed and staring — his mighty frame quivering as an infant's, beneath the agony of that dream. He woke — he collected himself — he blessed the gods whom he disbelieved, that he was in a dream ! he turned his eyes from side to side — he saw the dawning light break through his small but lofty window — he was in the precincts of day — he rejoiced — he smiled ; his eyes fell, and opposite to him he beheld the ghastly features, the lifeless eye, the livid lip — of the hag of Vesuvius ! ”

“ Ha ! ” he cried, placing his hands before his eyes, as to shut out the grisly vision, “ do I dream still ? am I with the dead ? ”

“ Mighty Hermes, no ! Thou art with one deathlike, but not dead. Recognise thy friend and slave ! ”

There was a long silence. Slowly the shudders that passed over the limbs of the Egyptian chased each other away, faintlier and faintlier dying, till he was himself again.

“ It was a dream, then ! ” said he. “ Well — let me dream no more, or the day cannot compensate for the pangs of night. Woman, how camest thou here, and wherefore ? ”

“ I came to warn thee,” answered the sepulchral voice of the saga.

“ Warn me ! the dream lied not, then ? Of what peril ? ”

“ Listen to me. Some evil hangs over this fated city. Fly while it be time. Thou knowest that I hold my home on that mountain beneath which old tradition saith there yet burn the fires of the river of Phlegethon ; and in my cavern is a vast abyss, and in that abyss I have of late marked a red and dull stream creep slowly, slowly on ; and heard many and mighty sounds hissing and roaring through the gloom. But last night, as I looked thereon, behold the stream was no longer dull, but intensely and fiercely luminous ; and while I gazed, the beast that lived with me, and was cowering by my side, uttered a shrill howl, and fell down and died ; and the slaver and froth were round his lips.* I crept back to my lair ; but I distinctly heard, all the night, the rock shake and tremble ; and, though the air was heavy and still, there were the hissing of pent winds, and the grinding as of wheels, beneath the ground. So, when I rose this morning at the very birth of dawn, I looked again down the abyss, and I saw vast fragments of stone borne black and floatingly over the lurid stream ; and the stream itself was broader, fiercer, redder than the night before. Then I went forth, and ascended to the summit of the rock ; and in that summit there appeared a sudden and vast hollow, which I had never perceived before, from which curled a dim, faint smoke ; and the vapour was deathly, and I gasped and sickened, and nearly died. I returned home. I took my gold and my drugs, and left the habitation of many years ; for I remembered the dark Etruscan prophecy, which saith, ‘ When the mountain opens, the city shall fall — when the smoke crowns the Hill of the Parched Fields, there shall be wo and weeping in the hearths of the Children of the Sea. Dread master, ere I leave these walls for some more distant dwelling, I come to thee. As thou livest, know I in my heart that the earthquake that sixteen years ago shook this city to its solid base, is but the forerunner of

* We may suppose that the exhalations were similar in effect to those in the *Grotto del Cana*.

more deadly doom. The walls of Pompeii are built above the fields of the dead and the rivers of the sleepless hell. Be warned and fly!"

"Witch, I thank thee, for thy care of one not ungrateful. On yon table stands a cup of gold; take it, it is thine. I dreamed not that there lived one, out of the priesthood of Isis, who would have saved Arbaces from destruction. The signs thou hast seen in the bed of the extinct volcano," continued the Egyptian, musingly, "surely tell of some coming danger to the city; perhaps another earthquake fiercer than the last. Be that as it may, there is a new reason for my hastening from these walls. After this day I will prepare my departure. Daughter of Etruria, whither wendest thou?"

"I shall cross over to Herculaneum this day, and, wandering thence along the coast, shall seek out a new home. I am friendless; my two companions, the fox and the snake, are dead. Great Hermes, thou hast promised me twenty additional years of life!"

"Ay," said the Egyptian, "I have promised thee. But, woman," he added, lifting himself upon his arms, and gazing curiously on her face, "tell me, I pray thee, wherefore thou wishest to live? What sweets dost thou discover in existence?"

"It is not life that is sweet, but death that is awful," replied the hag, in a sharp, impressive tone, that struck forcibly upon the heart of the vain star-seer. He winced at the truth of the reply; and, no longer anxious to retain so uninviting a companion, he said, "Time wanes; I must prepare for the solemn spectacle of this day. Sister, farewell! enjoy thyself as thou canst over the ashes of life."

The hag, who had placed the costly gift of Arbaces in the loose folds of her vest, now rose to depart. When she had gained the door she paused, turned back, and said, "This may be the last time we meet on earth; but where flieth the flame when it leaves the ashes, wandering to and fro, up and down, as an exhalation on the morass? The flame may be seen in the marshes of the lake below; and the witch and the magian, the pupil and the master, the great one and the accursed one, may meet again. Farewell!"

"Out, croaker," muttered Arbaces, as the door closed on the hag's tattered robes; and, impatient of his own thoughts, not yet recovered from the past dream, he hastily summoned his slaves.

It was the custom to attend the ceremonials of the amphitheatre in festive robes, and Arbaces arrayed himself that day with more than usual care. His tunic was of the most dazzling white; his many fibulæ were formed from the most precious stones; over his tunic flowed a loose eastern robe, half-gown, half-mantle, glowing in the richest hues of the Tyrian dye; and the sandals, that reached halfway up the knee, were studded with gems, and inlaid with gold. In the quackeries that belonged to his priestly genius, Arbaces never neglected, on great occasions, the arts which dazzle and impose upon the vulgar; and on this day, that was for ever to release him, by the sacrifice of Glaucus, from the fear of a rival and the chance of detection, he felt that he was arraying himself as for a triumph or a nuptial feast.

It was customary for men of rank to be accompanied to the shows of the amphitheatre by a procession of their slaves and freedmen; and the long "family" of Arbaces were already arranged in order, to attend the litter of their lord.

Only, to their great chagrin, the slaves in attendance on Ione, and the worthy Sosia, as jailer to Nydia, were condemned to remain at home.

"Callias," said Arbaces, apart, to his freedman, who was buckling on his girdle, "I am weary of Pompeii; I propose to quit it in three days, should the wind favour. Thou knowest the vessel that lies in the harbour, and belongs to Narses, of Alexandria; I have purchased it of him. The day after to-morrow we shall begin to remove my stores."

"So soon! 'T is well. Arbaces shall be obeyed; — and his ward, Ione?"

"Accompanies me. Enough! — Is the morning fair?"

"Dim and oppressive; it will probably be intensely hot in the forenoon."

"The poor gladiators, and more wretched criminals! Descend, and see that the slaves are marshalled."

Left alone, Arbaces stepped into his chamber of study, and thence upon the portico without. He saw the dense masses of men pouring fast into the amphitheatre, and heard the cry of the assistants, and the cracking of the cordage, as they were straining aloft the huge awning under which the citizens, molested by no discomforting ray, were to behold, at luxurious ease, the agonies of their fellow creatures. Suddenly a wild, strange sound went forth, and as suddenly died away — it was the roar of the lion. There was a silence in the distant crowd; but the silence was followed by joyous laughter — they were making merry at the hungry impatience of the royal beast.

"Brutes!" muttered the disdainful Arbaces, "are ye less homicides than I am? I slay but in self-defence — ye make murder pastime."

He turned with a restless and curious eye, towards Vesuvius. Beautifully glowed the green vineyards round its breast, and, tranquil as eternity, lay in the breathless skies the form of the mighty hill.

"We have time yet, if the earthquake be nursing," thought Arbaces; and he turned from the spot. He passed by the table which bore his mystic scrolls and Chaldean calculations.

"August art!" he thought, "I have not consulted thy decrees since I passed the danger and the crisis they foretold. What matter? — I know that *henceforth* all in my path is bright and smooth. Have not events already proved it? Away, doubt! — away, pity! — Mirror, O my heart, — mirror, for the future, but two images — Empire and Ione!"

CHAPTER II.

THE AMPHITHEATRE.

NYDIA, assured by the account of Sosia, on his return home, and satisfied that her letter was in the hands of Sallust, gave herself up once more to hope. Sallust would surely lose no time in seeking the prætor — in coming to the Egyptian — in releasing her — in breaking the prison of Calenus. That very night Glaucus would be free. Alas! the night passed — the dawn broke; she heard nothing but the hurried footsteps of the slaves along the hall and peristyle, and their voices in preparation for the show. By-and-by, the commanding voice of Arbaces broke on her ear — a flourish of music rung out cheerily: the long procession were sweeping to the amphitheatre to glut their eyes on the death-pangs of the Athenian.

The procession of Arbaces moved along slowly, and with much solemnity, till now, arriving at the place where it was necessary for such as came in litters or chariots to alight, Arbaces descended from his vehicle, and proceeded to the entrance by which the more distinguished spectators were admitted. His slaves mingling with the humbler crowd, were stationed by officers who received their tickets (not much unlike our modern opera ones) in places in the *popularia* (the seats apportioned to the vulgar). And now, from the spot where Arbaces sat, his eye scanned the mighty and impatient crowd that filled the stupendous theatre.

On the upper tier (but apart from the male spectators) sat the women, their gay dresses resembling some gaudy flower-bed; it is needless to add

that they were the most talkative part of the assembly, and many were the looks directed up to them, especially from the benches appropriated to the young and the unmarried men. On the lower seats round the arena sat the more highborn and wealthy visitors, — the magistrates, and those of senatorial or equestrian* dignity: the passages which by corridors at the right and left gave access to these seats, at either end of the oval arena, were also the entrances for the combatants. Strong palings at these passages prevented any unwelcome eccentricity in the movements of the beasts, and confined them to their appointed prey. Around the parapet, which was raised above the arena, and from which the seats gradually rose, were gladiatorial inscriptions, and paintings wrought in fresco, typical of the entertainments for which the place was designed. Throughout the whole building wound invisible pipes, from which as the day advanced, cooling and fragrant showers were to be scattered over the spectators. The officers of the amphitheatre were still employed in the task of fixing the vast awning (or *velaria*) which covered the whole, and which luxurious invention the Campanians arrogated to themselves: it was woven of the whitest Apuleian wool, and variegated with broad stripes of crimson. Owing either to some inexperience on the part of the workmen, or to some defect in the machinery, the awning, however, was not arranged that day so happily as usual; indeed, from the immense space of the circumference, the task was always one of great difficulty and art — so much so, that it could seldom be adventured in rough or windy weather. But the present day was so remarkably still that there seemed to the spectators no excuse for the awkwardness of the artificers; and when a large gap in the back of the awning was still visible, from the obstinate refusal of one part of the *velaria* to ally itself with the rest, the murmurs of discontent were loud and general.

The ædile Pansa, at whose expense the exhibition was given, looked particularly annoyed at the defect, and vowed bitter vengeance on the head of the *villicus*, or chief officer, who, fretting, puffing, perspiring, busied himself in idle orders and unavailing threats.

The hubbub ceased suddenly — the operators desisted — the crowd were stilled — the gap was forgotten — for now, with a loud and warlike flourish of trumpets, the gladiators, marshalled in ceremonious procession, entered the arena. They swept round the oval space very slowly and deliberately, in order to give the spectators full leisure to admire their stern serenity of feature — their brawny limbs and various arms, as well as to form such wagers as the excitement of the moment might suggest.

"Oh!" cried the widow Fulvia to the wife of Pansa, as they leaned down from their lofty bench, "do you see that gigantic gladiator? how drolly he is dressed!"

"Yes," said the ædile's wife, with complacent importance, for she knew all the names and qualities of each combatant; "he is a *retarius*, or netter; he is armed only, you see, with a three-pronged spear like a trident, and a net; he wears no armour, only the fillet and the tunic. He is a mighty man, and is to fight with *Sporus*, yon thick-set gladiator with the round shield and drawn sword, but without body armour; he has not his helmet now, in order that you may see his face: how fearless it is! — by-and-by he will fight with his visor down."

"But surely a net and a spear are poor arms against the shield and sword!"

"That shows how innocent you are, my dear Fulvia; the *retarius* generally has the best of it."

"But who is yon handsome gladiator, nearly naked — is it not quite improper? By *Venus*, but his limbs are beautifully shaped!"

"It is *Lydon*, a young untried man; he has the rashness to fight you

* The equites sat immediately behind the senators.

other gladiator, similarly dressed, or rather undressed — Tetraides. They fight first in the Greek fashion, with the cestus: afterward they put on armour, and try sword and shield."

"He is a proper man, this Lydon; and the women, I am sure, are on his side."

"So are not the experienced betters: Clodius offers threes to one against him."

"Oh, Jove! how beautiful!" exclaimed the widow, as two gladiators, armed cap-a-pie, rode round the arena on light and prancing steeds. Resembling much the combatants in the tilts of the middle ages, they bore lances and round shields, beautifully inlaid; their armour was woven intricately with bands of iron, but it covered only the thighs and the right arms; short cloaks, extending to the seat, gave a picturesque and graceful air to their costume; their legs were naked, with the exception of sandals, which were fastened a little above the ankle. "Oh, beautiful! who are these?" asked the widow.

The one is named Berbix — he has conquered twelve times; the other assumes the arrogant name of Nobilior. They are both Gauls."

While thus conversing, the first formalities of the show were over. To these succeeded a feigned combat with wooden swords between the various gladiators matched against each other. Among these the skill of two Roman gladiators, hired for the occasion, was the most admired; and next to them the most graceful combatant was Lydon. This sham contest did not last above an hour, nor did it attract any very lively interest, except among those connoisseurs of the arena to whom art was preferable to more coarse excitement: the body of the spectators were rejoiced when it was over, and when the sympathy rose to terror. The combatants were now arranged in pairs, as agreed beforehand; their weapons examined; and the grave sports of the day commenced amid the deepest silence, broken only by an exciting and preliminary blast of warlike music.

It was often customary to commence the sports by the most cruel of all. Some bestiarius, or gladiator appointed to the beasts, was slain first, as an initiatory sacrifice. But in the present instance, the experienced Pansa thought it better that the sanguinary drama should progress — not decrease — in interest; and, accordingly, the execution of Olinthus and Glaucus was reserved for the last. It was arranged that the two horsemen should first occupy the arena; that the foot gladiators, paired off, should then be loosed indiscriminately on the stage; that Glaucus and the lion should next perform their part in the bloody spectacle; and the tiger and the Nazarene be the grand finale. And, in the spectacles of Pompeii, the reader of Roman history must limit his imagination, nor expect to find those vast and wholesale exhibitions of magnificent slaughter with which a Nero or a Caligula regaled the inhabitants of the imperial city. The Roman shows, which absorbed the more celebrated gladiators, and the chief proportion of foreign beasts, were indeed the very reason why, in the lesser towns of the empire, the sports of the amphitheatre were comparatively humane and rare; and in this, as in other respects, Pompeii was but the miniature, the microcosm, of Rome. Still it was an awful and imposing spectacle, with which modern times have, happily, nothing to compare; — a vast theatre, rising row upon row, nearly five hundred feet in height, and swarming with human beings from fifteen to eighteen thousand in number — intent upon no fictitious representation — no tragedy of the stage — but the actual victory or defeat — the exulting life or the bloody death of each and all who entered the arena!

The two horsemen were now at either extremity of the lists (if so they might be called); and, at a given signal from Pansa, the combatants started simultaneously as in full collision, each advancing his round buckler, each

poising on high his light yet sturdy javelin; but, just when within three paces of his opponent, the steed of Berbix suddenly halted, wheeled round, and, as Nobilior was borne rapidly by, his antagonist spurred upon him. The buckler of Nobilior, quickly and skilfully extended, received a blow which otherwise would have been fatal.

"Well done, Nobilior!" cried the prætor, giving the first vent to the popular excitement.

"Bravely struck, my Berbix!" answered Clodius from his seat.

And the wild murmur, swelled by many a shout, echoed from side to side. The visors of both the horsemen were completely closed (like those of the knights in after-times), but the head was, nevertheless, the great point of assault; and Nobilior, now wheeling his charger with no less adroitness than his opponent, directed his spear full on the helmet of his foe. Berbix raised his buckler to shield himself; and his quick-eyed antagonist, suddenly lowering his weapon, pierced him through the breast. Berbix reeled and fell.

"Nobilior! Nobilior!" shouted the populace.

"I have lost ten sestertia,"* said Clodius between his teeth.

"*Hæbet!* he has it," said Pansa, deliberately.

The populace, not yet hardened into cruelty, made the signal of mercy; but as the attendants of the arena approached, they found the kindness came too late—the heart of the Gaul had been pierced, and his eyes were set in death. It was his life's blood that flowed so darkly over the sand and sawdust of the arena.

"It is a pity it was so soon over—there was little enough for one's trouble," said the widow Fulvia.

"Yes, I have no compassion for Berbix. Any one might have seen that Nobilior did but feint. Mark, they fix the fatal hook to the body—they drag him away to the Spoliarium—they scatter new sand over the stage—Pansa regrets nothing more than that he is not rich enough to strew the arena with borax and cinnabar, as Nero used."

"Well, if it has been a brief battle, it is quickly succeeded—see my handsome Lydon on the arena—ay, and the net-bearer too—and the swordsmen! Oh, charming!"

There were now on the arena six combatants—Niger and his net, matched against Sporus with his shield and his short broadsword—Lydon and Tetraides, naked save by a cincture round the waist, each armed only with a heavy Greek cestus—and two gladiators from Rome, clad in complete steel, and evenly matched with immense bucklers and pointed swords.

The initiatory contest between Lydon and Tetraides being less deadly than that between the other combatants, no sooner had they advanced to the middle of the arena than, as by common consent, the rest held back, to see how that contest should be decided, and wait till fiercer weapons might replace the cestus, ere they themselves commenced hostility. They stood leaning on their arms and apart from each other, gazing on the show, which, if not bloody enough thoroughly to please the populace, they were still inclined to admire, because its origin was of their ancestral Greece.

No persons could, at first glance, have seemed less evenly matched than the two antagonists. Tetraides, though not taller than Lydon, weighed considerably more; the natural size of his muscles was increased, to the eyes of the vulgar, by masses of solid flesh; for, as it was a notion that the contest of the cestus fared easiest with him who was plumpest, Tetraides had encouraged to the utmost his hereditary predisposition to the portly. His shoulders were vast and his limbs thick-set, double-jointed, and slightly curved outward, in that formation which takes so much from beauty to give so largely to strength. But Lydon, except that he was slender even almost

* A little more than 80*l*.

to meagerness, was beautifully and delicately proportioned, and the skilful might have perceived that, with much less compass of muscle than his foe, that which he had was more seasoned — iron and compact. In proportion, too, as he wanted flesh, he was likely to possess activity; and a haughty smile on his resolute face, which strongly contrasted the stolid heaviness of his enemy's, gave assurance to those who beheld it, and united their hope to their pity. So that, despite the disparity of their seeming strength, the cry of the multitude was nearly as loud for Lydon as for Tetraides.

Whoever is acquainted with the modern prize-ring — whoever has witnessed the heavy and disabling strokes which the human fist, skilfully directed, hath the power to bestow — may easily understand how much that happy facility would be increased by a band carried by thongs of leather round the arm, as high as the elbow, and terribly strengthened about the knuckles by a plate of iron and sometimes a plumet of lead. Yet this, which was meant to increase, perhaps rather diminished the interest of the fray — for it necessarily shortened its duration; — a very few blows, successfully and scientifically *planted*, might suffice to bring the contest to a close; and the battle did not, therefore, often allow full scope for that energy, fortitude, and dogged perseverance which we technically style *pluck*, which not unusually wins the day against superior science, and which heightens, to so painful a delight, the interest in the battle, and the sympathy for the brave.

"Guard thyself!" growled Tetraides, moving nearer and nearer his foe, who rather shifted round him than receded.

Lydon did not answer, save by a scornful glance of his quick, vigilant eye. Tetraides struck — it was as the blow of a smith on a vice: Lydon sank suddenly on one knee — the blow passed over his head. Not so harmless was Lydon's retaliation. He quickly sprang to his feet, and aimed his cestus full on the broad breast of his antagonist. Tetraides reeled — the populace shouted.

"You are unlucky to-day," said Lepidus to Clodius; "You have lost one bet — you will lose another."

"By the gods! my bronzes go to the auctioneer if that is the case. I have no less than fifty sester tia* upon Tetraides. Ha, ha! See — see how he rallies! That was a home stroke; he has cut open Lydon's shoulder. — A Tetraides! — a Tetraides!"

"But Lydon is not disheartened. By Pollux! how well he keeps his temper. See how dexterously he avoids those hammer-like hands; dodging, now here, now there — circling round and round — ah, poor Lydon! he has it again."

"Three to one still on Tetraides! What say you, Lepidus?"

"Well — nine sester tia to three; be it so. What! again, Lydon! He stops — he gasps for breath. By the gods, he is down! No; — is he again on his legs? Brave Lydon! Tetraides is encouraged — he laughs loud — he rushes on him."

"Fool! success blinds him — he should be cautious. Lydon's eye is like a lynx's!" said Clodius, between his teeth.

"Ha, Clodius! saw you that! your man totters! — another blow — he falls — he falls!"

"Earth revives him, then. He is once more up; but the blood rolls down his face."

"By the Thunderer! Lydon wins it. See how he presses on him. That blow on the temple would have crushed an ox: it has crushed Tetraides. He falls again — he cannot move — *habet — habet!*"

"*Habet!*" repeated Pansa. "Take them out and give them the armour and swords."

* Above 400%.

"Noble editor," said the officers, "we fear that Tetrades will not recover in time; howbeit, we will try."

"Do so."

In a few moments the officers, who had dragged off the stunned and insensible gladiator, returned with rueful countenances. They feared for his life; he was utterly incapacitated from re-entering the arena.

"In that case," said Pansa, "hold Lydon a *subditus*; and the first gladiator that is vanquished, let Lydon supply his place with the victor."

The people shouted their applause at this sentence; then they again sunk into deep silence. The trumpets sounded loudly. The four combatants stood each against each, in prepared and stern array.

"Dost thou recognise the Romans, my Clodius? Are they among the celebrated, or are they merely *ordinarii*?"

"Eumolpus is a good second-rate swordsman, my Lepidus. Nepimus, the lesser man, I have never seen before, but he is the son of one of the imperial fiscales,* and brought up in a proper school; doubtless they will show sport. But I have no heart for the game; I cannot win back my money—I am undone. Curses on that Lydon! who could have supposed he was so dexterous, or so lucky!"

"Well, Clodius, shall I take compassion on you, and accept your own terms with these Romans?"

"An even ten sesteria on Eumolpus, then?"

"What! when Nepimus is untried? Nay, nay; that is too bad."

"Well—ten to eight?"

"Agreed."

While the contest in the amphitheatre had thus commenced, there was one in the loftier benches for whom it had assumed, indeed, a poignant, a stifling interest. The aged father of Lydon, despite his Christian horror of the spectacle, in his agonized anxiety for his son, had not been able to resist being a spectator of his fate. One amid a fierce crowd of strangers—the lowest rabble of the populace—the old man saw, felt nothing, but the form, the presence of his brave son! Not a sound had escaped his lips when twice he had seen him fall to the earth; only he had turned paler, and his limbs trembled. But he had uttered one low cry when he saw him victorious; unconscious, alas! of the more fearful battle to which that victory was but a prelude.

"My gallant boy!" said he, and wiped his eyes.

"Is he thy son?" said a brawny fellow to the right of the Nazarene; "he has fought well: let us see how he does by-and-by. Hark! he is to fight the first victor. Now, old boy, pray the gods that that victor be neither of the Romans; nor, next to them, the giant Niger."

The old man sat down again and covered his face. The fray for the moment was indifferent to him—Lydon was not one of the combatants. Yet—yet—the thought flashed across him—the fray was indeed of deadly interest—the first who fell was to make way for Lydon! He started up, and bent down, with straining eyes and clasped hands, to view the encounter.

The first interest was attracted towards the combat of Niger with Sporus; for this species of contest, from the fatal result which usually attended it, and from the great science it required in either antagonist, was always peculiarly inviting to the spectators.

They stood at a considerable distance from each other. The singular helmet which Sporus wore (the visor of which was down) concealed his face; but the features of Niger attracted a fearful and universal interest from their compressed and vigilant ferocity. Thus they stood for some moments, each eyeing each, until Sporus began slowly and with great caution

* Gladiators maintained by the emperor.

to advance, holding his sword pointed, like a modern fencer's, at the breast of his foe. Niger retreated as his antagonist advanced, gathering up his net with his right hand, and never taking his small glittering eye from the movements of the swordsman. Suddenly, when Sporus had approached nearly at arm's length, the retiarius threw himself forward, and cast his net. A quick inflection of body saved the gladiator from the deadly snare: he uttered a sharp cry of joy and rage, and rushed upon Niger; but Niger had already drawn in his net, thrown it across his shoulders, and now fled round the lists with a swiftness which the *secutor** in vain endeavoured to excel. The people laughed and shouted aloud, to see the ineffectual efforts of the broad-shouldered gladiator to overtake the flying giant; when, at that moment, their attention was turned from these to the two Roman combatants.

They had placed themselves at the onset face to face, at the distance of modern fencers from each other; but the extreme caution which both evinced at first had prevented any warmth of engagement, and allowed the spectators full leisure to interest themselves in the battle between Sporus and his foe. But the Romans were now heated into full and fierce encounter: they pushed, returned, advanced on, retreated from each other with all that careful yet scarcely perceptible caution which characterizes men well experienced and equally matched. But at this moment, Eumolpus, the elder gladiator, by that dexterous back-stroke which was considered in the arena so difficult to avoid, had wounded Nepimus in the side. The people shouted; Lepidus turned pale.

"Ho!" said Clodius, "the game is nearly over. If Eumolpus fights now the quiet fight, the other will gradually bleed himself away."

"But, thank the gods! he does not fight the backward fight. See,—he presses hard upon Nepimus! By Mars! but Nepimus had him there! the helmet rang again! Clodius, I shall win!"

"Why do I ever bet, but at the dice!" groaned Clodius to himself; "or why cannot one cog a gladiator!"

"A Sporus!—a Sporus!" shouted the populace, as Niger, having now suddenly paused, had again cast his net, and again unsuccessfully. He had not retreated this time with sufficient agility—the sword of Sporus had inflicted a severe wound upon his right leg; and, incapacitated to fly, he was pressed hard by the fierce swordsman. His great height and length of arm still continued, however, to give him no despicable advantages; and steadily keeping his trident at the front of his foe, he repelled him successfully for several minutes. Sporus now tried, by great rapidity of evolution, to get round his antagonist, who necessarily moved with pain and slowness. In so doing, he lost his caution—he advanced too near to the giant—raised his arm to strike, and received the three points of the fatal spear full in his breast! He sank on his knee. In a moment more the deadly net was cast over him, he struggled against its meshes in vain; again—again—again he writhed mutely beneath the fresh strokes of the trident! his blood flowed fast through the net and redly over the sand! He lowered his arms in acknowledgment of defeat.

The conquering retiarius withdrew his net, and leaning on his spear, looked to the audience for their judgment. Slowly, too, at the same moment, the vanquished gladiator rolled his dim and despairing eyes around the theatre. From row to row, from bench to bench, there glared upon him but merciless and un pitying eyes!

Hushed was the roar—the murmur! The silence was dread, for in it was no sympathy; not a hand—no, not even a woman's hand—gave the signal of charity and life! Sporus had never been popular in the arena;

* So called from the office of that tribe of gladiators, in following the foe the moment the net was cast, in order to smite him ere he could have time to rearrange it.

and, lately, the interest of the combat had been excited on behalf of the wounded Niger. The people were warmed into blood—the *mimic* fight had ceased to charm, the interest had mounted up to the desire of sacrifice and the thirst of death!

The gladiator felt that his doom was sealed: he uttered no prayer, no groan. The people gave the signal of death! In dogged but agonized submission he bent his neck to receive the fatal stroke. And now, as the spear of the *retarius* was not a weapon to inflict instant and certain death, there stalked into the arena a grim and fatal form, brandishing a short, sharp sword, and with features utterly concealed beneath its visor. With slow and measured steps, this dismal headman approached the gladiator, still kneeling—laid his left hand on his humbled crest—drew the edge of the blade across his neck—turned round to the assembly, lest, in the last moment, remorse should come upon them; the dread signal continued the same; the blade glittered brightly in the air;—fell;—and the gladiator rolled upon the sand; his limbs quivered—were still,—he was a corpse!*

His body was dragged at once from the arena, through the gate of death, and thrown into the gloomy den termed technically the *Spoliarium*. And ere it had well reached that destination, the strife between the remaining combatants was decided. The sword of Eumolpus had inflicted the death-wound upon the less experienced combatant. A new victim was added to the receptacle of the slain.

Throughout that mighty assembly there now ran a universal movement, the people breathed more freely, and re-settled themselves in their seats. A grateful shower was cast over every row from the concealed conduits. In cool and luxurious pleasure they talked over the late spectacle of blood. Eumolpus removed his helmet and wiped his brows; his close-curved hair and short beard, his noble Roman features and bright dark eye, attracted the general admiration. He was fresh, unwounded, unfatigued.

The editor paused, and proclaimed aloud that Lydon was to be the successor to the slaughtered Nepimus, and the new combatant of Eumolpus.

"Yet, Lydon," added he, "if thou wouldst decline the combat with one so brave and tried, thou mayst have full liberty to do so. Eumolpus is not the antagonist that was originally decreed for thee. Thou knowest best how far thou canst cope with him. If thou failest, thy doom is honourable death; if thou conquerest, out of my own purse I will double the stipulated prize."

The people shouted applause. Lydon stood in the lists; he gazed around; high above, he beheld the pale face, the straining eyes of his father. He turned away irresolute for a moment. No! the conquest of the *cæstus* was not sufficient—he had not yet won the price of victory—his father was still a slave!

"Noble edile!" he replied, in a firm and deep tone, "I shrink not from this combat. For the honour of Pompeii, I demand that one trained by its long-celebrated *lanista* shall do battle with this Roman."

The people shouted louder than before.

"Four to one against Lydon!" said Clodius to Lepidus.

"I would not take twenty to one! Why, Eumolpus is a very Achilles, and this poor fellow is but a *tiro*."

Eumolpus gazed hard on the face of Lydon; he smiled; yet the smile was followed by a slight and scarce audible sigh—a touch of compassionate emotion, which custom conquered the moment acknowledged it.

And now both, clad in complete armour, the sword drawn, the visor closed, the two last combatants of the arena (ere man, at least, was matched with beast) stood opposed to each other.

* See the engraving from the friezes at Pompeii, in the work on that city published in the Library of Entertaining Knowledge, vol. ii. p. 311.

It was just at this time that a letter was delivered to the prætor by one of the attendants of the arena; he removed the cincture—glanced over it for a moment—his countenance betrayed surprise and embarrassment. He re-read the letter, and then muttering,—“Tush! it is impossible!—the man must be drunk, even in the morning, to dream of such follies!”—threw it carelessly aside, and gravely settled himself once more, in the attitude of attention to the sports.

The interest of the public was wound up very high. Eumolpus had at first won their favour; but the gallantry of Lydon, and his well-timed allusion to the honour of the Pompeian lanista, had afterward given the latter the preference in their eyes.

“Halloo, old fellow!” said Medon’s neighbour to him. “Your son is hardly matched; but, never fear, the editor will not permit him to be slain,—no, nor the people neither; he has behaved too bravely for that. Ha! that was a home thrust!—well averted, by Pollux! At him again, Lydon!—they stop to breathe! What art thou muttering, old boy?”

“Prayers!” answered Medon, with a more calm and hopeful mien than he had yet maintained.

“Prayers!—trifles! The time for gods to carry a man away in a cloud is gone now. Ha, Jupiter!—what a blow! Thy side—thy side!—take care of thy side, Lydon!”

There was a convulsive tremor throughout the assembly. A fierce blow from Eumolpus, full on the crest, had brought Lydon to his knee.

“*Habet!*—he has it!” cried a shrill female voice; “he has it!—huzza!”

It was the voice of the girl who had anxiously anticipated the sacrifice of some criminal to the beasts.

“Be silent, child!” said the wife of Pansa, haughtily. “*Non habet!*—he is not wounded!”

“I wish he were, if only to spite old surly Medon,” muttered the girl.

Meanwhile Lydon, who had hitherto defended himself with great skill and valour, began to give way before the vigorous assaults of the practised Roman; his arm grew tired, his eye dizzy, he breathed hard and painfully. The combatants paused again for breath.

“Young man,” said Eumolpus, in a low voice, “desist; I will wound thee slightly,—then lower thy arms; thou hast propitiated the editor and the mob—thou wilt be honourably saved!”

“And my father still enslaved,” groaned Lydon to himself. “No! death or his freedom.”

At that thought, and seeing that, his strength not being equal to the endurance of the Roman, every thing depended on a sudden and desperate effort, he threw himself fiercely on Eumolpus; the Roman warily retreated—Lydon thrust again—Eumolpus drew himself aside—the sword grazed his cuirass—Lydon’s breast was exposed—the Roman plunged his sword through the joints of the armour, not meaning, however, to inflict a deep wound; Lydon, weak and exhausted, fell forward—fell right on the point: it passed through and through, even to the back! Eumolpus drew forth his blade; Lydon still made an effort to regain his balance—his sword left his grasp—he struck mechanically at the gladiator with his naked hand, and fell prostrate on the arena. With one accord editor and assembly made the signal of mercy—the officers of the arena approached—they took off the helmet of the vanquished. He still breathed; his eyes rolled fiercely on his foe; the savageness he had acquired in his calling glared from his gaze, and lowered upon the brow darkened already with the shades of death; then, with a convulsive groan, with a half start, he lifted his eyes above. They rested not on the face of the editor, nor on the pitying brows of his relenting judges. He saw them not; they were as if the vast space

was desolate and bare: one pale agonizing face alone was all he recognised; one cry of a broken heart was all that, amid the murmurs and the shouts of the populace, reached his ear. The ferocity vanished from his brow; a soft, a tender expression of sanctifying but despairing filial love played over his features—played—waned—darkened! His face suddenly became locked and rigid, resuming its former fierceness. He fell upon the earth.

"Look to him," said the edile, "he has done his duty!"

The officers dragged him off to the Spoliarium.

"A true type of glory, and of its fate!" murmured Arbaces to himself; and his eye, glancing round the amphitheatre, betrayed so much of disdain and scorn, that whoever encountered it felt his breath suddenly arrested, and his emotions frozen into one sensation of abasement and of awe.

Again rich perfumes were wafted around the theatre; the attendants sprinkled fresh sand over the arena.

"Bring forth the lion, and Glaucus the Athenian," said the editor.

And a deep and breathless hush of over-wrought interest, and intense (yet, strange to say, not displeasing) terror lay, like a mighty and awful dream, over the assembly.

CHAPTER III.

SALLUST, AND NYDIA'S LETTER.

THRICE had Sallust wakened from his morning sleep, and thrice, recollecting that his friend was that day to perish, had he turned himself with a deep sigh once more to court oblivion. His sole object in life was to avoid pain; and where he could not avoid—at least to forget it.

At length, unable any longer to steep his consciousness in slumber, he raised himself from his incumbent posture, and discovered his favourite freedman sitting by his bedside as usual; for Sallust, who, as I have said, had a gentlemanlike taste for the polite letters, was accustomed to be read to for an hour or so previous to his rising in the morning.

"No books to-day! no more Tibullus! no more Pindar for me! Pindar! alas, alas! the very name recalls those games to which our arena is the savage successor. Has it begun—the amphitheatre? are its rites commenced?"

"Long since, O Sallust! Did you not hear the trumpets and the trampling feet?"

"Ay, ay; but, the gods be thanked, I was drowsy, and had only to turn round to fall asleep again."

"The gladiators must have been long in the ring."

"The wretches! none of my people have gone to the spectacle?"

"Assuredly not; your orders were too strict."

"That is well—would the day were over! What is that letter yonder on the table?"

"That! O, the letter brought to you last night when you were too—too—"

"Drunk to read it, I suppose. No matter; it cannot be of much importance."

"Shall I open it for you, Sallust?"

"Do; any thing to divert my thoughts. Poor Glaucus!"

The freedman removed the fillet. "What! Greek?" said he; "some learned lady, I suppose." He glanced over the letter, and his countenance

exhibited sudden emotion and surprise. "Good gods! noble Sallust! what have we done, not to attend to this before? Hear me read!"

"Nydia the slave, to Sallust the friend of Glaucus! I am a prisoner in the house of Arbaces. Hasten to the prætor! procure my release, and we shall yet save Glaucus from the lion! There is another prisoner within these walls whose witness can exonerate the Athenian from the charge against him; — one who saw the crime — who can prove the criminal in a villain hitherto unsuspected. Fly! hasten! quick! quick! Bring with you armed men, lest resistance be made; — and a cunning and dexterous smith; for the dungeon door of my fellow-prisoner is thick and strong. Oh! by thy right hand, and thy father's ashes, lose not a moment!"

"Great gods!" exclaimed Sallust, starting, "and this day — nay, within this hour, perhaps he dies. What is to be done? I will instantly to the prætor."

"Nay; not so. The prætor (as well as Pansa, the editor himself) is the creature of the mob; and the mob will not hear of delay; they will not be balked in the very moment of expectation. Besides, the publicity of the appeal would forewarn the cunning Egyptian. It is evident that he has some interest in these concealments. No; fortunately, thy slaves are in thy house."

"I seize thy meaning," interrupted Sallust; "arm the slaves instantly. The streets are empty. We will ourselves hasten to the house of Arbaces, and release the prisoners. Quick! quick! What ho! Davus! there! My gown and sandals, the papyrus and a reed.* I will write to the prætor to beseech him to delay the sentence of Glaucus, for that, within an hour, we may yet prove him innocent. — So, so; that is well. — Hasten with this, Davus, to the prætor at the amphitheatre. See it given to his own hand. Now, then, O ye gods, whose providence Epicurus denied, befriend me, and I will call Epicurus a liar!"

CHAPTER IV.

THE AMPHITHEATRE ONCE MORE.

GLAUCUS and Olinthus had been placed together in that gloomy and narrow cell in which the criminals of the arena awaited their last and fearful struggle. Their eyes, of late accustomed to the darkness, scanned the faces of each other in this awful hour, and by that dim light, the paleness which chased away the natural hues from either cheek assumed a yet more ashen and ghastly whiteness. Yet their brows were erect and dauntless — their limbs did not tremble — their lips were compressed and rigid. The religion of the one, the pride of the other, the conscious innocence of both, and, it may be, the support derived from their mutual companionship, elevated the victim into the hero.

"Hark! hearest thou that shout? They are growling over their human blood," said Olinthus.

"I hear; my heart grows sick; but the gods support me."

"The gods! O rash young man! in this hour recognise only the one God. Have I not taught thee in the dungeon, wept for thee, prayed for thee — in my zeal and in my agony, have I not thought more of thy salvation than my own?"

* The reed (calamus) was used for writing on papyrus and parchment, the stilus for writing on waxen tablets, brass plates, &c. Letters were written sometimes on papyrus — sometimes on tablets.

"Brave friend!" answered Glaucus, solemnly, "I have listened to thee with awe, with wonder, and with a secret tendency towards conviction. Had our lives been spared, I might gradually have weaned myself from the tenets of my own faith, and inclined to thine; but in this last hour, it were a craven thing and a base, to yield to hasty terror what should be only the result of lengthened meditation. Were I to embrace thy creed, and cast down my fathers' gods, should I not be bribed by thy promise of heaven, or awed by thy threats of hell? Olinthus, no! Think we of each other with equal charity—I honouring thy sincerity—thou pitying my blindness, or my obdurate courage. As have been my deeds, such will be my reward; and the Power or powers above will not judge harshly of human error, when it is linked with honesty of purpose and truth of heart. Speak we no more of this. Hush! Dost thou hear them drag yon heavy body through the passage? such as that clay will be ours soon."

"O Heaven! O Christ! already I behold ye!" cried the fervent Olinthus, lifting up his hands; "I tremble not—I rejoice that the prison-house shall be soon broken!"

Glaucus bowed his head in silence. He felt the distinction between his fortitude and that of his fellow-sufferer. The heathen did not tremble, but the Christian exulted.

The door swung gratingly back—the gleam of spears shot along the walls.

"Glaucus the Athenian, thy time has come," said a loud and clear voice; "the lion awaits thee."

"I am ready," said the Athenian. "Brother and co-mate, one last embrace! Bless me—and farewell!"

The Christian opened his arms—he clasped the young heathen to his breast—he kissed his forehead and cheek—he sobbed aloud—his tears flowed fast and hot over the features of his friend.

"O! could I have converted thee, I had not wept. Oh, that I might say to thee, 'We two shall sup this night in paradise!'"

"It may be so yet," answered the Greek, with a tremulous voice: "they whom death parted not may meet yet beyond the grave. On the earth, on the beautiful, the beloved earth, farewell for ever! Worthy officer, I am ready."

Glaucus tore himself away; and when he came forth into the air, its breath, which, though sunless, was hot and arid, smote witheringly upon him. His frame, not yet restored from the effects of the deadly draught, shrank and trembled. The officers supported him.

"Courage!" said one; "thou art young, active, well knit. They give thee a weapon; despair not, and thou mayst yet conquer."

Glaucus did not reply; but, ashamed of his infirmity, he made a desperate and convulsive effort, and regained the firmness of his nerves. They anointed his body, completely naked, save by a cincture round the loins, placed the stilus (vain weapon!) in his hand, and led him into the arena.

And now, when the Greek saw the eyes of thousands and tens of thousands upon him, he no longer felt that he was mortal. All evidence of fear—all fear itself—was gone. A red and haughty flush spread over the paleness of his features—he towered aloft to the full of his glorious stature. In the elastic beauty of his limbs and form—in his intent but unfrowning brow—in the high disdain, and in the indomitable soul, which breathed visibly—which spake audibly—from his attitude, his lip, his eye,—he seemed the very incarnation, vivid and corporeal, of the valour of his land—of the divinity of its worship—at once a hero and a god!

The murmur of hatred and horror at his crime which had greeted his entrance died into the silence of involuntary admiration and a half compassionate respect; and, with a quick and convulsive sigh, that seemed to move the whole mass of life as if it were one body, the gaze of the specta-

tors turned from the Athenian to a dark uncouth object in the centre of the arena. It was the grated den of the lion!

"By Venus, how warm it is!" said Fulvia: "yet there is no sun. Would those stupid sailors could have fastened up that gap in the awning."

"Oh! it is warm indeed. I turn sick — I faint!" said the wife of Pansa; even her experienced stoicism giving way at the struggle about to take place.

The lion had been kept without food for twenty-four hours, and the animal had, during the whole morning, testified a singular and restless uneasiness, which the keeper had attributed to the pangs of hunger. Yet its bearing seemed rather that of fear than of rage; its roar was painful and distressed; it hung its head — snuffed the air through the bars — then lay down — started again — and again uttered its wild and far-resounding cries. And now, in its den, it lay utterly dumb and mute, with distending nostrils, forced hard against the grating, and disturbing, with a heaving breath, the sand below on the arena.

The editor's lip quivered and his cheek grew pale; he looked anxiously around — hesitated — delayed; the crowd became impatient. Slowly he gave the sign; the keeper, who was behind the den, cautiously removed the grating, and the lion leaped forth with a mighty and glad roar of release. The keeper hastily retreated through the grated passage leading from the arena, and left the lord of the forest — and his prey.

Glaucus had bent his limbs so as to give himself the firmest posture at the expected rush of the lion, with his small and shining weapon raised on high, in the faint hope that *one* well-directed thrust (for he knew that he should have time but for *one*) might penetrate through the eye to the brain of his grim foe.

But, to the unutterable astonishment of all, the beast seemed not even aware of the presence of the criminal. At the first moment of its release, it halted abruptly in the arena, raised itself half on end, snuffing the upward air with impatient sighs; then suddenly it sprang forward, but not on the Athenian. At half-speed it circled round and round the space, turning its vast head from side to side with an anxious and perturbed gaze, as if seeking only some avenue of escape; once or twice it endeavoured to leap up the parapet that divided it from the audience, and on failing, uttered rather a baffled howl than its deep-toned and kingly roar. It evinced no sign either of wrath or hunger; its tail drooped along the sand instead of lashing its gaunt sides; and its eye, though it wandered at times to Glaucus, rolled again listlessly from him. At length, as if tired of attempting to escape, it crept with a moan into its cage, and once more laid itself down to rest.

The first surprise of the assembly at the apathy of the lion soon grew converted into resentment at its cowardice, and the populace already merged their pity for the fate of Glaucus into angry compassion for their own disappointment.

The editor called to the keeper:

"How is this? Take the goad, prick him forth, and then close the door of the den."

As the keeper, with some fear, but more astonishment, was preparing to obey, a loud cry was heard at one of the entrances of the arena; there was a confusion, a bustle — voices of remonstrance suddenly breaking forth, and suddenly silenced at the reply. All eyes turned, in wonder at the interruption, towards the quarter of the disturbance; the crowd gave way, and suddenly Sallust appeared on the senatorial benches, his hair dishevelled — breathless — heated — half exhausted. He cast his eyes hastily round the ring. "Remove the Athenian!" he cried; "haste — he is innocent? Arrest Arbaces the Egyptian — ~~he~~ is the murderer of Apæcides!"

"Art thou mad, O Sallust!" said the prætor, rising from his seat; "what means this raving?"

"Remove the Athenian! — Quick, or his blood be on your head: Prætor, delay, and you answer with your own life to the emperor! I bring with me the eye-witness to the death of the priest Apæcides. Room there! — stand back! — give way! People of Pompeii, fix every eye upon Arbaces — there he sits! Room there — for the priest Calenus!"

Pale — haggard — fresh from the jaws of famine and of death — his face fallen, his eyes dull as a vulture's, his broad frame gaunt as a skeleton, — Calenus was supported into the very row in which Arbaces sat. His releasers had given him sparingly of food; but the chief sustenance that nerved his feeble limbs was revenge!

"The priest Calenus! — Calenus!" cried the mob. "Is it he? No — it is a dead man!"

"It is the priest Calenus," said the prætor, gravely. "What hast thou to say?"

"Arbaces of Egypt is the murderer of Apæcides, the priest of Isis; these eyes saw him deal the blow. It is from the dungeon in which he plunged me — it is from the darkness and horror of a death by famine — that the gods have raised me to proclaim his crime! Release the Athenian — he is innocent!"

"It is for this, then, that the lion spared him — a miracle! a miracle!" cried Pansa.

"A miracle! a miracle!" shouted the people; "remove the Athenian — Arbaces to the lion!"

And that shout echoed from hill to vale — from coast to sea — "*Arbaces to the lion!*"

"Officers, remove the accused Glaucus — remove, but guard him yet," said the prætor. "The gods lavish their wonders upon this day."

As the prætor gave the word of release there was a cry of joy — a female voice — a child's voice — and it was of joy! It rang through the heart of the assembly with electric force — it was touching, it was holy — that child's voice! And the populace echoed it back with a sympathizing gratulation!

"Silence!" said the grave prætor — "who is there?"

"The blind girl — Nydia," answered Sallust; "it is her hand that has raised Calenus from the grave, and delivered Glaucus from the lion."

"Of this hereafter," said the prætor. "Calenus, priest of Isis, thou accusest Arbaces of the murder of Apæcides?"

"I do!"

"Thou didst behold the deed?"

"Prætor — with these eyes —"

"Enough at present — the details must be reserved for more suiting time and place. Arbaces of Egypt, thou hearest the charge against thee — thou hast not yet spoken — what hast thou to say?"

The gaze of the crowd had been long riveted on Arbaces. But not until the confusion which he had betrayed at the first charge of Sallust and the entrance of Calenus had subsided. — At the shout, "*Arbaces to the lion!*" he had indeed trembled, and the dark bronze of his cheek had taken a paler hue. But he had now recovered his haughtiness and self-control. Proudly he returned the angry glare of the countless eyes around him; and replying now to the question of the prætor, he said, in that accent, so peculiarly tranquil and commanding, which characterized his tones,

"Prætor, this charge is so mad that it scarcely deserves reply. My first accuser is the noble Sallust — the most intimate friend of Glaucus! my second is a priest — I revere his garb and calling — but, people of Pompeii! ye know somewhat of the character of Calenus — he is griping and gold-thirsty to a proverb — the witness of such men is to be bought! Prætor — I am innocent!"

"Sallust," said the magistrate, "where found you Calenus?"

"In the dungeons of Arbaces."

"Egyptian," said the prætor, frowning, "thou didst, then, dare to imprison a priest of the gods — and wherefore?"

"Hear me," answered Arbaces, rising calmly, but with agitation visible in his face: "This man came to threaten that he would make against me the charge he has now made, unless I would purchase his silence with half my fortune — I remonstrated — in vain. — Peace, there — let not the priest interrupt me! — Noble prætor — and ye, O people! — I was a stranger in the land — I knew myself innocent of crime — but the witness of a priest against me might yet destroy me. In my perplexity I decoyed him to the cell whence he has been released, on pretence that it was the coffer-house of my gold. I resolved to detain him there until the fate of the true criminal was sealed, and his threats could avail no longer. But I meant no worse — I may have erred — but who among ye will not acknowledge the equity of self-preservation? Were I guilty, why was the witness of this priest silent at the trial? — *then* I had not detained nor concealed him. Why did he not proclaim my guilt when I proclaimed that of Glaucus? Prætor, this needs an answer. For the rest, I throw myself on your laws. I demand their protection. Remove hence the accused and the accuser. I will willingly meet, and cheerfully abide by, the decision of the legitimate tribunal. This is no place for farther parley."

"He says right," said the prætor. "Ho! guards — remove Arbaces — guard Calenus! Sallust, we hold you responsible for your accusation. Let the sports be resumed."

"What!" cried Calenus, turning round to the people, "shall Isis be thus contemned? Shall the blood of Apæcides yet cry for vengeance? Shall justice be delayed now, that it may be frustrated hereafter? Shall the lion be cheated of his lawful prey? A god — a god! — I feel the god rush to my lips! *To the lion — to the lion with Arbaces!*"

His exhausted frame could support no longer the ferocious malice of the priest; he sank on the ground in strong convulsions — the foam gathered to his mouth — he was as a man, indeed, whom a supernatural power had entered! The people saw and shuddered.

"It is a god that inspires the holy man — *to the lion with the Egyptian!*"

With that cry up sprang — on moved — thousands upon thousands! They rushed from the heights — they poured down in the direction of the Egyptian. In vain did the edile command — in vain did the prætor lift his voice and proclaim the law. The people had been already rendered savage by the exhibition of blood — they thirsted for more — their superstition was aided by their ferocity. Aroused — inflamed by the spectacle of their victims, they forgot the authority of their rulers. It was one of those dread popular convulsions common to crowds wholly ignorant, half free, and half servile; and which the peculiar constitution of the Roman provinces so frequently exhibited. The power of the prætor was as a reed beneath the whirlwind; still, at his word, the guards had drawn themselves along the lower benches, on which the upper classes sat separate from the vulgar. They made but a feeble barrier — the waves of the human sea halted for a moment, to enable Arbaces to count the exact moment of his doom! In despair, and in a terror which beat down even pride, he glanced his eyes over the rolling and rushing crowd — when, right above them, through the wide chasm which had been left in the velaria, he beheld a strange and awful apparition — he beheld — and his craft restored his courage!

He stretched his hand on high; over his lofty brow and royal features there came an expression of unutterable solemnity and command.

"Behold!" he shouted, with a voice of thunder, which stilled the roar of

the crowd ; " behold how the gods protect the guiltless ! The fires of the avenging Orcus burst forth against the false witness of my accusers ! "

The eyes of the crowd followed the gesture of the Egyptian, and beheld with ineffable dismay a vast vapour shooting from the summit of Vesuvius in the form of a gigantic pine-tree ; the trunk, blackness ; — the branches, fire ; that shifted and wavered in its hues with every moment, now fiercely luminous, now of a dull and dying red, that again blazed terrifically forth with intolerable glare !

There was a dead, heart-sunken silence — through which there suddenly broke the roar of the lion, which, from within the building, was echoed back by the sharper and fiercer yells of its fellow-breast. Dread seers were they of the burthen of the atmosphere, and wild prophets of the wrath to come !

Then there rose on high the universal shrieks of women ; the men stared at each other, but were dumb. At that moment they felt the earth shake beneath their feet ; the walls of the theatre trembled ; and beyond, in the distance, they heard the crash of falling roofs ; an instant more, and the mountain cloud seemed to roll towards them, dark and rapid, like a torrent ; at the same time, it cast forth from its bosom a shower of ashes, mixed with vast fragments of burning stone ! Over the crushing vines, — over the desolate streets, — over the amphitheatre itself, — far and wide, — with many a mighty splash in the agitated sea, — fell that awful shower !

No longer thought the crowd of justice or of Arbaces ; safety for themselves was their sole thought. Each turned to fly — each dashing, pressing, crushing against the other. Trampling recklessly over the fallen, — amid groans, and oaths, and prayers, and sudden shrieks, the enormous crowd vomited itself forth through the numerous passages. Whither should they fly ? Some, anticipating a second earthquake, hastened to their homes to load themselves with their more costly goods, and escape while it was yet time ; others, dreading the showers of ashes that now fell fast, torrent upon torrent, over the streets, rushed under the roofs of the nearest houses, or temples, or sheds — shelter of any kind — for protection from the terrors of the open air. But darker, and larger, and mightier spread the cloud above them. It was a sudden and more ghastly night rushing upon the realm of noon !

CHAPTER V.

THE CELL OF THE PRISONER AND THE DEN OF THE DEAD — GRIEF UNCONSCIOUS OF HORROR.

STUNNED by his reprieve, doubting that he was awake, Glaucus had been led by the officers of the arena into a small cell within the walls of the theatre. They threw a loose robe over his form, and crowded round in congratulation and wonder. There was an impatient and fretful cry without the cell ; the throng gave way, and the blind girl, led by some generous hand, flung herself at the feet of Glaucus.

" It is I who have saved thee," she sobbed ; " now let me die ! "

" Nydia, my child ! — my preserver ! "

" Oh, let me feel thy touch — thy breath ! Yes, yes, thou livest ! We are not too late ! That dread door, — methought it would never yield ! and Calenus — Oh, his voice was as the dying wind among tombs : — he had to wait, — gods ! it seemed hours, ere food and wine restored to him something of strength ; but thou livest ! thou livest yet ! and I — I have saved thee ! "

This affecting scene was soon interrupted by the event just described.

"The mountain! the earthquake!" resounded from side to side. The officers fled with the rest; they left Glaucus and Nydia to save themselves as they might.

As the sense of the dangers around them flashed on the Athenian, his generous heart recurred to Olinthus. He, too, was relieved from the tiger by the hand of the gods; should he be left to a no less fatal death in the neighbouring cell? Taking Nydia by the hand, Glaucus hurried across the passages; he gained the den of the Christian. He found Olinthus kneeling, and in prayer.

"Arise! arise! my friend," he cried. "Save thyself, and fly! See! Nature is thy dread deliverer!" He led forth the bewildered Christian, and pointed to the cloud which advanced darker and darker, disgorging forth showers of ashes and pumice-stones; and bade him hearken to the cries and trampling rush of the scattered crowd.

"This is the hand of God — God be praised!" said Olinthus, devoutly.

"Fly! seek thy brethren! Concert with them thy escape. Farewell!"

Olinthus did not answer, neither did he mark the retreating form of his friend. High thoughts and solemn absorbed his soul: and in the enthusiasm of his heart, he exulted in the mercy of God rather than trembled at the evidence of His power.

At length he roused himself, and hurried on, he scarce knew whither.

The open doors of a dark desolate cell suddenly appeared on his path; through the gloom within there flared and flickered a single lamp; and by its light he saw three grim and naked forms stretched on the earth in death. His feet were suddenly arrested: for amid the terrors of that drear recess — the Spoliarium of the arena, — he heard a low voice calling on the name of Christ!

He could not resist lingering at that appeal; he entered the den, and his feet were dabbled in the slow streams of blood that gushed from the corpses over the sand.

"Who," said the Nazarene, "calls upon the Son of God?"

No answer came forth; and, turning round, Olinthus beheld, by the light of the lamp, an old gray-headed man sitting on the floor, and supporting in his lap the head of one lately dead. The features of the dead man were firmly and rigidly locked in the last sleep; but over the lip there played a fierce smile — not the Christian's smile of hope, — but the dark sneer of hatred and defiance. Yet on the face still lingered the beautiful roundness of early youth. The hair curled thick and glossy over the unwrinkled brow; and the down of manhood but slightly shaded the marble of the hueless, yet iron cheek. And over this face bent one of such unutterable sadness — of such yearning tenderness — of such fond and such deep despair! The tears of the old man fell fast and hot, but he did not feel them; and when his lips moved, and he mechanically uttered the prayer of his benign and hopeful faith, neither his heart nor his sense responded to the words: it was but the involuntary emotion that broke from the lethargy of his mind. His boy was dead, and had died for him! — and the old man's heart was broken!

"Medon!" said Olinthus, pityingly, "arise, and fly! God is forth upon the wings of the elements! — the New Gomorrah is doomed! — fly, ere the fires consume thee!"

"He was ever so full of life! — he *cannot* be dead! Come hither! — place your hand on his heart! — sure it beats yet!"

"Brother, the soul has fled! — we will remember it in our prayers! Thou canst not restore the dumb clay! Come, come! — Hark! while I speak, yon crashing walls! — hark! yon agonizing cries! Not a moment is to be lost! — come!"

"I hear nothing!" said Medon, shaking his gray hair. "The poor boy, his love murdered him!"

"Come, come! — forgive this friendly force."

"What! Who would sever the father from the son?" and Medon clasped the body tightly in his embrace — and covered it with passionate kisses. "Go!" said he, lifting up his face for one moment. "Go! — we must be alone!"

"Alas!" said the compassionate Nazarene, — "Death hath severed ye already!"

The old man smiled very calmly. "No, no, no!" he muttered, his voice growing lower with each word, — "Death has been more kind!"

With that, his head drooped on his son's breast — his arms relaxed their grasp. Olinthus caught him by the hand — the pulse had ceased to beat! The last words of the father were the words of truth, — *Death had been more kind!*

Meanwhile, Glaucus and Nydia were pacing swift up the perilous and fearful streets. The Athenian had learned from his preserver that Ione was yet in the house of Arbaces. Thither he fled, to release — to save her! The few slaves that the Egyptian had left at his mansion when he repaired in long procession to the amphitheatre, had been able to offer no resistance to the armed band of Sallust; and when afterward the volcano broke forth, they had huddled together, stunned and frightened, in the inmost recesses of the house. Even the tall Ethiopian had forsaken his post at the door; and Glaucus (who left Nydia without — the poor Nydia, jealous once more, even in such an hour!) passed on through the vast hall without meeting one from whom to learn the chamber of Ione. Even as he passed, however, the darkness that covered the heavens increased so rapidly that it was with difficulty he could guide his steps. The flower-wreathed columns seemed to reel and tremble; and with every instant he heard the ashes fall cranchingly into the roofless peristyle. Breathless he paced along, shouting out aloud the name of Ione; and at length he heard, at the end of a gallery, a voice — *her* voice, in wondering reply! To rush forward — to shatter the door — to seize Ione in his arms — to hurry from the mansion — seemed to him the work of an instant! Scarce had he gained the spot where Nydia was, when he heard steps advancing towards the house, and recognised the voice of Arbaces, — who had returned to seek his wealth and Ione, ere he fled from the doomed Pompeii. But so dense was already the reeking atmosphere, that the foes saw not each other, though so near — save that, dimly in the gloom, Glaucus caught the moving outline of the snowy robes of the Egyptian.

They hastened onward — those three! Alas! — whither? They now saw not a step before them — the blackness became utter. They were encompassed with doubt and horror; — and the death he had escaped seemed to Glaucus only to have changed its form and augmented its victims.

CHAPTER VI.

CALENUS AND BURBO — DIOMED AND CLODIUS — THE GIRL OF THE AMPHITHEATRE AND JULIA.

THE sudden catastrophe which had, as it were, riven the very bonds of society, and left prisoner and jailer alike free, had soon rid Calenus of the guards, to whose care the prætor had consigned him. And when the darkness and the crowd separated the priest from his attendants, he hastened,

with trembling steps, towards the temple of his goddess. As he crept along, and ere the darkness was complete, he felt himself suddenly caught by the robe, and a voice muttered in his ear, —

"Hist! — Calenus! — an awful hour!"

"Ay! by my father's head! Who art thou? — thy face is dim, and thy voice is strange!"

"Not know thy Burbo? — fy!"

"Gods! — how the darkness gathers! Ho, ho! — by yon terrific mountain, what sudden blazes of lightning!* How they dart and quiver! Hades is loosed on earth!"

"Tush! — thou believest not these things, Calenus! Now is the time to make our fortunes!"

"Ha!"

"Listen! — thy temple is full of gold and precious mummeries! — let us load ourselves with them, and then hasten to the sea and embark! None will ever ask an account of the doings of this day!"

"Burbo, thou art right! Hush! — and follow me into the temple. Who cares now — who sees now — whether thou art priest or not? Follow — and we will share?"

In the precincts of the temple were many priests gathered round the altars, praying, weeping, grovelling in the dust. Impostors in safety, they were not the less superstitious in danger! Calenus passed them, and entered the chamber yet to be seen in the south side of the court. Burbo followed him — the priest struck a light. Wine and viands strewed the table — the remains of a sacrificial feast.

"A man who has hungered forty-eight hours," muttered Calenus, "has an appetite even in such a time." He seized on the food, and devoured it greedily. Nothing could, perhaps, be more unnaturally horrid than the selfish baseness of these villains; for there is nothing more loathsome than the valour of avarice! Plunder and sacrilege while the pillars of the world tottered to and fro! What an increase to the terrors of nature can be made by the vices of man!

"Wilt thou never have done?" said Burbo, impatiently; "thy face purples, and thine eyes start already."

"It is not every day one has such a right to be hungry. O Jupiter! what sound is that? — the hissing of fiery water! What! — does the cloud give rain as well as flame! Ha — what! shrieks? And, Burbo, how silent all is now! Look forth."

Amid the other horrors, the mighty mountain now cast up columns of boiling water. Blent and kneaded with the half-burning ashes, the streams fell like seething mud over the streets in frequent intervals. And full, where the priests of Isis had now cowered around the altars, on which they had vainly sought to kindle fires and pour incense, one of these deadly torrents, mingled with immense fragments of scoria, had poured its rage. Over the banded forms of the priests it dashed: that cry had been of death — that silence had been of eternity. The ashes — the pitchy stream — sprinkled the altars, covered the pavement, and half concealed the quivering corpses of the priests!

"They are dead," said Burbo, terrified, for the first time, and hurrying back into the cell; "I thought not the danger was so near and fatal."

The two wretches stood staring at each other — you might have heard their hearts beat! Calenus, the less bold by nature, but the more griping, recovered first.

"We must do our task and away!" he said, in a low whisper, frightened

*Vulcanic lightnings. These phenomena were especially the characteristic of the long-subsequent eruption of 1779, and their evidence is visible in the tokens of that, now described.

at his own voice. He stopped at the threshold, paused, crossed over the heated floor and his dead brethren to the sacred chapel, and called to Burbo to follow. But the gladiator quaked and drew back.

"So much the better," thought Calenus; "the more will be my booty." Hastily he loaded himself with the more portable treasures of the temple; and thinking no more of his comrade, hurried from the sacred place. A sudden flash of lightning from the mount showed Burbo, who stood motionless at the threshold, the flying and laden form of the priest. He took heart—he stepped forth to join him, when a tremendous shower of ashes fell right before his feet. The gladiator shrank back once more. Darkness closed him in. But the shower continued fast—fast; its heaps rose high and suffocatingly—deathly vapours steamed from them. The wretch gasped for breath—he sought in despair again to fly—the ashes had blocked up the threshold—he shrieked as his feet shrank from the boiling fluid. How could he escape?—he could not climb to the open space—nay, were he able, he could not brave its horrors. It were best to remain in the cell, protected, at least, from the fatal air. He sat down, and clenched his teeth. By degrees the atmosphere from without—stifling and venomous—crept into the chamber. He could endure it no longer. His eyes, glaring round, rested on a sacrificial axe which some priest had left in the chamber; he seized it. With the desperate strength of his gigantic arm, he attempted to hew his way through the walls.

Meanwhile, the streets were already thinned; the crowd had hastened to disperse itself under shelter—the ashes began to fill up the lower parts of the town; but, here and there, you heard the steps of fugitives cranching them warily, or saw their pale and haggard faces by the blue glare of the lightning, or the more unsteady glare of torches, by which they endeavoured to steer their steps. But ever and anon the boiling water, the straggling ashes, or mysterious and gusty winds rising and dying in a breath, extinguished these wandering lights, and, with them, the last living hope of those who bore them.

In the street that leads to the gate of Herculaneum, Clodius now bent his perplexed and doubtful way. "If I can gain the open country," thought he, "doubtless there will be various vehicles beyond the gate, and Herculaneum is not far distant. Thank Mercury! I have little to lose, and that little is about me!"

"Hollo!—help there—help!" cried a querulous and frightened voice. "I have fallen down—my torch is gone out—my slaves have deserted me: I am Diomed—the rich Diomed,—ten thousand sesterces to him who helps me!"

At the same moment Clodius felt himself caught by the feet. "Ill fortune to thee,—let me go, fool!" said the gambler.

"Oh, help me up—give me thy hand!"

"There—rise!"

"Is this Clodius? I know thy voice! Whither fliest thou?"

"Towards Herculaneum."

"Blessed be the gods! our way is the same, then, as far as the gate. Why not take refuge in my villa? Thou knowest the long range of subterranean cellars beneath the basement,—that shelter, what shower can penetrate?"

"You speak well," said Clodius, musingly; "and by storing the cellar with food, we can remain there even some days, should these wondrous storms endure so long."

"O, blessed be he who invented gates to a city!" cried Diomed. "See!—they have placed a light within yon arch; by that let us guide our steps."

The air was now still for a few minutes—the lamp from the gate streamed out far and clear: the fugitives hurried on—they gained the gate—they

passed by the Roman sentry; the lightning flashed over his livid face and polished helmet; but his stern features were composed even in their awe! He remained erect and motionless at his post. That hour itself had not animated the machine of the ruthless majesty of Rome into the reasoning and self-acting man! There he stood amid the crashing elements. He had not received the permission to desert his station and escape!*

Diomed and his companion hurried on, — when, suddenly, a female form rushed athwart their way. It was the girl whose ominous voice had been raised so often and so gladly in anticipation of “the merry show!”

“Oh, Diomed!” she cried, “shelter! shelter! See” — pointing to an infant clasped to her breast — “see this little one! it is mine! the child of shame! I have never owned it till this hour! But *now* I remember I am a mother! I have plucked it from the cradle of its nurse; *she* had fled! Who could think of the babe in such a time but she who bore it! Save it! save it!”

“Curses on thy shrill voice! Away, harlot!” muttered Clodius, between his ground teeth.

“Nay, girl,” said the more humane Diomed; “follow if thou wilt. This way — this way — to the vaults!”

They hurried on — they arrived at the bouse of Diomed — they laughed aloud as they crossed the threshold, for they deemed the danger over.

Diomed ordered his slaves to carry down into the subterranean vaults a profusion of food, and oil for lights; and thither Julia, Clodius, the mother and her babe, the greater part of the slaves, and some frightened visitors and clients in the neighbourhood, who had fled there for refuge, sought their shelter.

CHAPTER VII.

THE PROGRESS OF THE DESTRUCTION.

THE cloud which had scattered so deep a murkiness over the day had now settled into a solid and impenetrable mass. It resembled less even the thickest gloom of a night in the open air than the close and blind darkness of some narrow room.† But, in proportion as the blackness gathered, did the lightnings around Vesuvius increase in their vivid and scorching glare. Nor was their horrible beauty confined to the usual hues of fire; no rainbow ever rivalled their varying and prodigal dyes. Now brightly blue as the most azure depth of a southern sky — now of a livid and snake-like green, darting restlessly to and fro as the folds of an enormous serpent — now of a lurid and intolerable crimson, gushing forth through the columns of smoke, far and wide, and lighting up the whole city from arch to arch, — then suddenly dying into a sickly paleness, like the ghost of its own life!

In the pauses of the showers, you heard the rumbling of the earth beneath, and the groaning waves of the tortured sea; or, lower still, and audible but to the watch of intensest fear, the grinding and hissing murmur of the escaping gases through the chasms of the distant mountain. Sometimes the cloud appeared to break from its solid mass, and, by the lightning, to assume quaint and vast mimicries of human or of monster shapes, striding across the gloom, hustling one upon the other, and vanishing swiftly into the turbulent abyss of shade; so that, to the eyes and fancies of the affrighted wanderers, the unsubstantial vapours were as the bodily forms of gigantic foes, — the agents of terror and of death.‡

* The skeletons of more than one sentry were found at their posts
† Pliny.

‡ Dion Cassius.

The ashes in many places were already knee-deep ; and the boiling showers which came from the steaming breath of the volcano forced their way into the houses, bearing with them a strong and suffocating vapour. In some places immense fragments of rock hurled upon the house-roofs, bore down along the streets masses of confused ruin, which yet more and more, with every hour, obstructed the way ; and, as the day advanced, the motion of the earth was more sensibly felt—the footing seemed to slide and creep—nor could chariot or litter be kept steady, even on the most level ground.

Sometimes the huge stones, striking against each other as they fell, broke into countless fragments, emitting sparks of fire which caught whatever was combustible within their reach ; and along the plains beyond the city the darkness was now terribly relieved ; for several houses, and even vineyards, had been set on flames ; and at various intervals the fires rose sullenly and fiercely against the solid gloom. To add to this partial relief of the darkness, the citizens had, here and there, in the more public places, such as the porticoes of temples, and the entrances to the forum, endeavoured to place rows of torches ; but these rarely continued long ; the showers and the winds extinguished them, and the sudden darkness into which their sudden birth was converted had something in it doubly terrible, and doubly impressing on the impotence of human hopes the lesson of despair.

Frequently, by the momentary light of these torches, parties of fugitives encountered each other—some hurrying towards the sea, others flying from the sea back to the land ; for the ocean had retreated rapidly from the shore—an utter darkness lay over it, and upon its groaning and tossing waves the storm of cinders and rock fell without the protection which the streets and roofs afforded to the land. Wild—haggard—ghastly with supernatural fears, these groups encountered each other, but without leisure to speak, to consult, to advise ; for the showers fell now frequently, though not continuously, extinguishing the lights which showed to each band the death-like faces of the other, and hurrying all to seek refuge beneath the nearest shelter. The whole elements of civilization were broken up. Ever and anon, by the flickering lights, you saw the thief hastening by the most solemn authorities of the law, laden with, and fearfully chuckling over, the produce of his sudden gains. If, in the darkness, wife was separated from husband, or parent from child, vain was the hope of reunion. Each hurried blindly and confusedly on. Nothing in all the various and complicated machinery of social life was left, save the primal law of self-preservation !

Through this awful scene did the Athenian wade his way, accompanied by Ione and the blind girl. Suddenly a rush of hundreds, in their path to the sea, swept by them. Nydia was torn from the side of Glaucus, who, with Ione, was borne rapidly onward ; and when the crowd (whose forms they saw not, so thick was the gloom) were gone, Nydia was still separated from their side. Glaucus shouted her name. No answer came. They retraced their steps—in vain ; they could not discover her—it was evident that she had been swept along some opposite direction by the human current. Their friend, their preserver, was lost ! And hitherto Nydia had been their guide. *Her blindness rendered to her alone the scene familiar.* Accustomed through a perpetual night to thread the windings of the city, she led them unerringly towards the seashore, by which they had resolved to hazard an escape. Now, which way could they wend ? all was rayless to them—a maze without a clew. Wearied, despondent, bewildered, they however passed along, the ashes falling upon their heads, the fragmentary stones dashing up in sparkles before their feet.

“ Alas ! alas ! ” murmured Ione, “ I can go no farther ; my steps sink

among the scorching cinders, Fly, dearest! beloved — fly! and leave me to my fate."

"Hush, my betrothed! my bride! Death with thee is sweeter than life without thee! Yet whither, O whither can we direct ourselves through the gloom? Already it seems that we have made but a circle, and are in the very spot which we quitted an hour ago."

"O gods! yon rock — see, it hath riven the roof before us. It is death to move through the streets!"

"Blessed lightning! See, Ione — see! the portico of the Temple of Fortune is before us. Let us creep beneath it; it will protect us from the showers!"

He caught his beloved in his arms, and with difficulty and labour gained the temple. He bore her to the remoter and more sheltered part of the portico, and leaned over her, that he might shield her with his own form from the lightning and the showers! The beauty and the unselfishness of love could hallow even that dismal time.

"Who is there?" said the trembling and hollow voice of one who had preceded them in their place of refuge; "yet what matters! the crush of the ruined world forbids to us friends or foes."

Ione turned at the sound of the voice, and, with a faint shriek, cowered again beneath the arms of Glaucus; and he, looking in the direction of the voice, beheld the cause of her alarm. Through the darkness glared forth two burning eyes, — the lightning flashed and lingered athwart the temple; and Glaucus, with a shudder, perceived the lion to which he had been doomed couch beneath the pillars; and, close beside him — unwitting of the vicinity — lay the giant form of the gladiator, Niger.

That lightning had revealed to each other the form of beast and man; yet the instinct of both was quelled. Nay, the lion crept near and nearer to the gladiator, as for companionship; and the gladiator did not recede or tremble. The revolution of Nature had dissolved her lighter terrors and her wonted ties.

While they were thus terribly protected, a group of men and women, bearing torches, passed by the temple. They were of the congregation of the Nazarenes; and a sublime and unearthly emotion had not indeed quelled their awe, but it had robbed awe of fear. They had long believed, according to the error of the early Christians, that the Last Day was at hand; they imagined now that the Day had come."

"Wo! wo!" cried in a shrill and piercing voice, the elder at their head. "Behold! the Lord descendeth to judgment! He maketh fire come down from heaven in the sight of men! Wo! wo! ye strong and mighty! Wo to ye of the fasces and the purple! Wo to the idolator and the worshipper of the beast! Wo to ye who pour forth the blood of saints, and gloat over the death-pangs of the sons of God! Wo to the harlot of the sea! — Wo! wo!"

And with a loud and deep chorus, the troop chanted forth along the wild horrors of the air: — "Wo to the harlot of the sea! wo! wo!"

The Nazarenes paced slowly on, their torches still flickering in the storm, their voices still raised in menace and solemn warning, till, lost amid the windings in the streets, the darkness of the atmosphere, and the silence of death again fell over the scene.

There was one of the frequent pauses in the showers, and Glaucus encouraged Ione once more to proceed. Just as they stood, hesitating, on the last step of the portico, an old man, with a bag in his right hand, and leaning upon a youth, tottered by. The youth bore a torch. Glaucus recognised the two as father and son — miser and prodigal.

"Father," said the youth, "if you cannot move more swiftly, I must leave you, or we both perish!"

"Fly, boy, then, and leave thy sire."

"But I cannot fly to starve; give me thy bag of gold!" And the youth snatched at it.

"Wretch! wouldst thou rob thy father?"

"Ay! who can tell the tale in this hour? Miser, perish!"

The boy struck the old man to the ground, plucked the bag from his relaxing hand, and fled onward with a shrill yell.

"Ye gods!" cried Glaucus; "are ye blind, then; even in the dark? Such crimes may well confound the guiltless with the guilty in one common ruin. Ione, on! on!"

CHAPTER VIII.

ARBACES ENCOUNTERS GLAUCUS AND IONE.

ADVANCING, as men grope for escape in a dungeon, Ione and her lover continued their uncertain way. At the moments when the volcanic lightnings lingered over the streets, they were enabled by that awful light to steer and guide their progress. Yet little did the view it presented to them cheer or encourage their path. In parts where the ashes lay dry and uncommixed with the boiling torrents cast upward from the mountain, at capricious intervals — the surface of the earth presented a leprous and ghastly white. In other places, cinder and rock lay matted in heaps, from beneath which might be seen the half-hid limbs of some crushed and mangled fugitive. The groans of the dying were broken by wild shrieks of women's terror — now near, now distant — which, when heard in the utter darkness, were rendered doubly appalling by the crushing sense of helplessness and the uncertainty of the perils around; and clear and distinct through all were the mighty and various noises from the Fatal Mountain; its rustling winds; its whirling torrents; and, from time to time, the burst and roar of some more fiery and fierce explosion. And ever as the winds swept howling along the street, they bore sharp streams of burning dust, and such sickening and poisonous vapours as took away, for the instant, breath and consciousness, followed by a rapid revulsion of the arrested blood, and a tingling sensation of agony trembling through every nerve and fibre of the frame.

"Oh! Glaucus my beloved — my own, take me to thy arms! One embrace — let me feel thy arms around me — and in that embrace let me die — I can no more!"

"For my sake, for my life — courage, yet, sweet Ione — my life is linked with thine; and see — torches — this way! Lo! how they brave the wind! Ha! they live through the storm — doubtless, fugitives to the sea! — we will join them."

As if to inspire the lovers, the winds and showers came to a sudden pause; the atmosphere was profoundly still — the mountain seemed at rest, gathering, perhaps, fresh fury for its next burst: the torch-bearers moved quickly on. "We are nearing the sea," said, in a calm voice, the person at their head; "liberty and wealth to each slave who survives this day! — Courage! — I tell you, that the gods themselves have assured me of deliverance — on!"

Redly and steadily the torches flashed full on the eyes of Glaucus and Ione, who lay trembling and exhausted on his bosom. Several slaves were bearing, by the light, panniers and coffers, heavily laden; in front of them. — a drawn sword in his hand, — towered the lofty form of Arbaces.

"By my fathers!" cried the Egyptian, "fate smiles upon me even through

these horrors, and, amid the dreaddest aspects of wo and death, bodes me happiness and love. Away, Greek! I claim my ward Ione!"

"Traitor and murderer!" cried Glaucus, glaring upon his foe, "Nemesis hath guided thee to my revenge! — a just sacrifice to the shades of Hades, that now seem loosed on earth. Approach — touch but the hand of Ione, and thy weapon shall be as a reed — I will tear thee limb from limb!"

Suddenly, as he spoke, the place became lighted with an intense and lurid glow. Bright and gigantic through the darkness, which closed around it like the walls of hell, the mountain shone — a pile of fire! Its summit seemed riven in two; or rather above its surface there seemed to rise two monster-shapes, each confronting each, as demons contending for a world. These were of one deep blood-red hue of fire, which lighted up the whole atmosphere far and wide; but *below*, the nether part of the mountain was still dark and shrouded, — save in three places, adown which flowed, serpentine and irregular, (a) rivers of the molten lava. Darkly red through the profound gloom of their banks, they flowed slowly on, as towards the devoted city. Over the broadest there seemed to spring a cragged and stupendous arch, from which, as from the jaws of hell, gushed the sources of the sudden Phlegethon. And through the stilled air was heard the rattling of the fragments of rock, hurling one upon another as they were borne down the fiery cataracts — darkening, for one instant, the spot where they fell, and suffused, the next, in the burnished hues of the flood along which they floated!

The slaves shrieked aloud, and, cowering, hid their faces. The Egyptian himself stood transfixed to the spot, the glow lighting up his commanding features and jewelled robes. High behind him rose a tall column that supported the bronze statue of Augustus; and the imperial image seemed changed to a shape of fire!

With his left hand circled round the form of Ione — with his right arm raised in menace, and grasping the stilus which was to have been his weapon in the arena, and which he still fortunately bore about him — with his brow knit — his lips apart — the wrath and menace of human passions arrested, as by a charm, upon his features, — Glaucus fronted the Egyptian!

Muttering to himself, Arbaces turned his eyes from the mountain — they rested on the form of Glaucus! He paused a moment: "Why," he muttered, "should I hesitate? Did not the stars foretell the only crisis of imminent peril to which I was subjected? — Is not that peril past?"

"The soul," cried he aloud, "can brave the wreck of worlds and the wrath of imaginary gods! By that soul will I conquer to the last! Advance, slaves! — Athenian, resist me, and thy blood be on thine own head! Thus, then, I regain Ione!"

He advanced one step — it was his last on earth! The ground shook beneath him with a convulsion that cast all around upon its surface. A simultaneous crash resounded through the city, as down toppled many a

(a) "Rivers of the molten lava."

Various theories as to the exact mode by which Pompeii was destroyed have been invented by the ingenious. I have adopted that which is the most generally received, and which, upon inspecting the strata, appears the only one admissible by common sense; namely, a destruction by showers of ashes and boiling water, mingled with frequent interruptions of large stones, and aided by partial convulsions of the earth. Herculaneum, on the contrary, appears to have received, not only the showers of ashes, but also inundations from molten lava; and the streams referred to in the text must be considered as destined for that city rather than for Pompeii. The volcanic lightnings introduced in my description were evidently among the engines of ruin at Pompeii. Papyrus, and other of the more inflammable materials, are found in a burnt state. Some substances in metal are partially melted; and a bronze statue is completely shivered, as by lightning. Upon the whole, I believe my description of the destruction is very little assisted by invention, and will be found not the less accurate for its appearance in a romance.

roof and pillar! — the lightning, as if caught by the metal, lingered an instant on the Imperial Statue — then shivered bronze and column! Down fell the ruin, echoing along the street, and riving the solid pavement where it crashed! — The prophecy of the stars was fulfilled!

The sound — the shock stunned the Athenian for several moments. When he recovered, the light still illumined the scene — the earth still slid and trembled beneath! Ione lay senseless on the ground; but he saw her not yet — his eyes were fixed upon a ghastly face that seemed to emerge, without limbs or trunk, from the huge fragments of the shattered column — a face of unutterable pain, agony, and despair! The eyes shut and opened rapidly, as if sense were not yet fled; the lips quivered and grinned — then sudden stillness and darkness fell over the features, yet retaining that aspect of horror never to be forgotten!

So perished the wise Magian — the great Arbaces — the Hermes of the Burning Belt — the last of the royalty of Egypt!

CHAPTER IX.

THE DESPAIR OF THE LOVERS — THE CONDITION OF THE MULTITUDE.

GLAUCUS turned in gratitude but in awe, caught Ione once more in his arms, and fled along the street, that was yet intensely luminous. But suddenly a duller shade fell over the air. Instinctively he turned to the mountain, and behold! one of the two gigantic crests, into which the summit had been divided, rocked and wavered to and fro; and then, with a sound the mightiness of which no language can describe, it fell from its burning base, and rushed, an avalanche of fire, down the sides of the mountain! At the same instant gushed forth a volume of blackest smoke, rolling on, over air, sea, and earth.

Another, and another, and another shower of ashes, far more profuse than before, scattered fresh desolation along the streets. Darkness once more wrapped them as a veil; and Glaucus, his bold heart at last quelled and despairing, sunk beneath the cover of an arch, and clasping Ione to his heart — a bride on that couch of ruin — resigned himself to die!

Meanwhile Nydia, when separated by the throng from Glaucus and Ione, had in vain endeavoured to regain them. In vain she raised that plaintive cry so peculiar to the blind; it was lost amid a thousand shrieks of more selfish terror. Again and again she returned to the spot where they had been divided — to find her companions gone, to seize every fugitive — to inquire of Glaucus — to be dashed aside in the impatience of distraction. Who in that hour spared one thought to his neighbour! Perhaps in scenes of universal horror nothing is *more* horrid than the unnatural selfishness they engender! At length it occurred to Nydia, that, as it had been resolved to seek the seashore for escape, her most probable chance of rejoining her companions would be to persevere in that direction. Guiding her steps, then, by the staff which she always carried, she continued with incredible dexterity to avoid the masses of ruin that encumbered the path — to thread the streets; and unerringly (so blessed now was that accustomed darkness so afflicting in ordinary life!) to take the nearest direction to the seaside.

Poor girl! her courage was beautiful to behold! and Fate seemed to favour one so helpless. The boiling torrents touched her not, save by the general rain which accompanied them; the huge fragments of scoria shivered the pavement before and beside her, but spared that frail form; and when

the lesser ashes fell over her, she shook them away with a slight tremor,* and dauntlessly resumed her course.

Weak, exposed, yet fearless, supported but by one wish, she was a very emblem of *Psyche* in her wanderings; — of *Hope*, walking through the valley of the shadow; — a very emblem of the Soul itself — lone but comforted — amid the dangers and the snares of life!

Her path was, however, constantly impeded by the crowds, that now groped amid the gloom, now fled in the temporary glare of the lightnings across the scene; and, at length, a group of torch-bearers, rushing full against her, she was thrown down with some violence.

"What!" said the voice of one of the party, "is this the brave blind girl? By *Bacchus*, she must not be left here to die! Up! my *Thessalian*! So — so. Are you hurt? That's well! Come on with us! we are for the shore!"

"O, *Sallust*! it is thy voice! The gods be thanked! *Glaucus*! *Glaucus*! have ye seen him?"

"Not I! He is doubtless out of the city by this time. The gods who saved him from the lion will save him from the burning mountain."

As the kindly epicure thus encouraged *Nydia*, he drew her along with him towards the sea, heeding not her passionate entreaties that he would linger yet a while to search for *Glaucus*; and still, in the accent of despair she continued to shriek aloud that beloved name, which, amid all the roar of the convulsed elements, kept alive a music at her heart.

The sudden illumination, the burst of the floods of lava, and the earthquake, which we have already described, chanced when *Sallust* and his party had just gained the direct path leading from the city to the port; and here they were arrested by an immense crowd, more than half the population of the city. They spread along the city without the walls, thousands upon thousands, uncertain whither to fly. The sea had retired far from the shore; and they who had fled to it had been so terrified by the agitation and preternatural appearance of the elements, the gasping forms of the uncouth sea, things which the waves had left upon the sand, and by the sound of the huge stones cast from the mountain into the deep, that they had returned again to the land, as presenting the less frightful aspect of the two. Thus the two streams of human beings, the one seaward, and the other from the sea, had met together, feeling a sad comfort in numbers, arrested in despair and doubt.

"The world is to be destroyed by fire," said an old man in long loose robes, a philosopher of the Stoic school. "Stoic and Epicurean wisdom have alike agreed in this prediction; and the hour is come!"

"Yea! the hour is come!" cried a loud voice, solemn, but not fearful.

Those around turned in dismay. The voice came from above them. It was the voice of *Olinthus*, who, surrounded by his Christian friends, stood upon an abrupt eminence on which the old Greek colonists had raised a temple to *Apollo*, now time-worn and half in ruin.

As he spake, there came that sudden illumination which had heralded the death of *Arbaces*; and glowing over that mighty multitude, awed, crouching, breathless, never on earth had the faces of men seemed so haggard! — never had meeting of mortal beings been so stamped with the horror and sublimity of dread! — never, till the last trumpet sounds, shall such meeting be seen again! And above rose the form of *Olinthus*, with outstretched arm and prophet brow, girt with the living fires. And the crowd knew the face of him they had doomed to the fangs of the beast — *then* their victim, *now* their warner; and through the stillness again came his ominous voice —

* "A heavy shower of ashes rained upon us, which every now and then we were obliged to shake off, otherwise we should have been crushed and buried in a heap." — *Pliny*.

"The hour is come!"

The Christians repeated the cry. It was caught up—it was echoed from side to side—woman and man—childhood and old age—repeated, not aloud, but in a smothered and dreary murmur—"THE HOUR IS COME!"

At that moment a wild yell burst through the air; and thinking only of escape, whither it knew not, the terrible tiger of the African desert leaped among the throng, and hurried through its parted streams. And so came the earthquake, and so darkness once more fell over the earth!

And now new fugitives arrived. Grasping the treasures no longer destined for their lord, the slaves of Arbaces joined the throng. One only of their torches yet flickered on. It was borne by Sosia, and its light falling on the face of Nydia, he recognised the Thessalian.

"What avails thy liberty now, blind girl?" said the slave.

"Who art thou?—canst thou tell me of Glaucus?"

"Ay; I saw him but a few minutes since."

"Blessed be thy head! where?"

"Couched beneath the arch of the forum—dead or dying!—gone to rejoin Arbaces, who is no more!"

Nydia uttered not a word; she slid from the side of Sallust; silently she glided through those behind her, and retraced her steps to the city. She gained the forum—the arch; she stooped down; she felt around; he called on the name of Glaucus.

A weak voice answered, "Who calls on me? Is it the voice of the shades? Ho! I am prepared!"

"Arise! follow me! Take my hand! Glaucus, thou shalt be saved!"

In wonder and sudden hope Glaucus arose—"Nydia still! Ah! thou, then, art safe!"

The tender joy of his voice pierced the heart of the poor Thessalian, and she blessed him for his thought of her.

Half-leading, half-carrying Ione, Glaucus followed his guide. With admirable discretion she avoided the path which led to the crowd she had just quitted, and by another route sought the shore.

After many pauses and incredible perseverance, they gained the sea, and joined a group, who, bolder than the rest, resolved to hazard any peril rather than continue in such a scene. In darkness they put forth to sea; but, as they cleared the land and caught new aspects of the mountain, its channels of molten fire threw a partial redness over the waves.

Utterly exhausted and worn out, Ione slept on the breast of Glaucus, and Nydia lay at his feet. Meanwhile the showers of dust and ashes, still borne aloft, fell into the wave, and scattered their snows over the deck. Far and wide, borne by the winds, those showers descended upon the remotest climes, startling even the swarthy African; and whirled along the antique soil of Syria and of Egypt!*

CHAPTER X.

THE NEXT MORNING—THE FATE OF NYDIA.

AND meekly, softly, beautifully dawned at last the light over the trembling deep!—the winds were sinking into rest—the foam died from the glowing azure of that delicious sea. Around the east, thin mists caught gradually the rosy hues that heralded the morning; light was about to resume her

* Dion Cassius.

reign. Yet still, dark, and massive in the distance lay the broken fragments of the destroying cloud, from which red streaks, burning dimlier and more dim, betrayed the yet rolling fires of the mountain of "Scorched Fields." The white walls and gleaming columns that had adorned the lovely coast, were no more. Sullen and dull were the shores so lately crested by the cities of Herculaneum and Pompeii. The darlings of the Deep were snatched from her embrace! Century after century shall the mighty Mother stretch forth her azure arms, and know them not — moaning round the sepulchres of the lost!

There was no *shout* from the mariners at the dawning light—it had come too gradually, and they were too wearied for such sudden bursts of joy—but there was a low deep *murmur* of thankfulness amid these watchers of the long night. They looked at each other, and smiled—they took heart—they felt once more that there was a world around, and a God above them! And in the feeling that the worst was past, the over-wearied ones turned round, and fell placidly to sleep. In the growing light of the skies there came the silence which night had wanted—the sweetness of repose; and the bark drifted calmly onward to its port. A few other vessels, bearing similar fugitives, might be seen in the expanse, apparently motionless, yet gliding also on. There was a sense of security, of companionship, and of hope, in the sight of their slender masts and white sails. What beloved friends, lost and missed in the gloom, might they not bear to safety and to shelter!

In the silence of the general sleep, Nydia rose gently. She bent over the face of Glaucus—she inhaled the deep breath of his heavy slumber—timidly and sadly she kissed his brow—his lips; she felt for his hand—it was locked in that of Ione; she sighed deeply, and her face darkened. Again she kissed his brow, and with her hair wiped from it the damps of night. "May the gods bless you, Athenian!" she murmured—"may you be happy with your beloved one!—may you sometimes remember Nydia! Alas! she is of no farther use on earth!"

With these words she turned away. Slowly she crept along by the *ferri*, or platforms, to the farther side of the vessel, and, pausing, bent low over the deep; the cool spray dashed upward on her feverish brow. "It is the kiss of death," she said—"it is welcome." The balmy air played through her waving tresses—she put them from her face, and raised those eyes—so tender, though so lightless—to the sky, whose soft face she had never seen!

"No, no!" she said, half aloud, and in a musing and thoughtful tone; "I cannot endure it; this jealous, exacting love—it shatters my whole soul in madness! I might harm him again—wretch that I was! I have saved him—twice saved him—happy, happy thought—why not die happy?—it is the last glad thought I can ever know. O! sacred Sea! I hear thy voice invitingly—it hath a freshening and joyous call. They say that in thy embrace is dishonour—that thy victims cross not the fatal Styx—be it so!—I would not meet him in the Shades, for I should meet him still with her! Rest—rest—rest!—there is no other Elysium for a heart like mine!"

A sailor, half-dozing on the deck, heard a slight splash on the waters. Drowsily he looked up, and behind, as the vessel merrily bounded on, he fancied he saw something white above the waves; but it vanished in an instant. He turned round again, and dreamed of his home and children.

When the lovers awoke, their first thought was of each other—their next of Nydia! She was not to be found—none had seen her since the night. Every crevice of the vessel was searched—there was no trace of her. Mysterious from first to last, the blind Thessalian had vanished for ever from the living world! They guessed her fate in silence; and Glau-

cus and Ione, while they drew nearer to each other, (feeling each other the world itself,) forgot their deliverance, and wept as for a departed sister.

CHAPTER THE LAST.

WHEREIN ALL THINGS CEASE.

LETTER FROM GLAUCUS TO SALLUST — TEN YEARS AFTER THE DESTRUCTION OF POMPEII.

Athens.

GLAUCUS to his beloved Sallust — greeting and health! — You request me to visit you at Rome — no, Sallust, come rather to me at Athens! I have forsworn the Imperial City, its mighty tumult and hollow joys. In my own land henceforth I dwell for ever. The ghost of our departed greatness is dearer to me than the gaudy life of your loud prosperity. There is a charm to me which no other spot can supply, in the porticoes hallowed still by holy and venerable shades: in the olive groves of Ilyssus I still hear the voice of Poetry — on the heights of Phyle the clouds of twilight seem yet the shrouds of departed freedom — the herald — the herald — of the morrow that shall come! You smile at my enthusiasm, Sallust! — better be hopeful in chains than resigned to their glitter. You tell me you are sure that I cannot enjoy life in these melancholy haunts of a fallen majesty. You dwell with rapture on the Roman splendours, and the luxuries of the imperial court. My Sallust — “*non sum qualis eram*” — I am not what I was! The events of my life have sobered the bounding blood of my youth. My health has never quite recovered its wonted elasticity ere it felt the pangs of disease, and languished in the damps of a criminal’s dungeon. My mind has never shaken off the dark shadow of the Last Day of Pompeii — the horror and the desolation of that awful ruin! Our beloved — our remembered Nydia! I have reared a tomb to her shade; and I see it every day from the window of my study. It keeps alive in me a tender recollection — a not unpleasing sadness — which are but a fitting homage to her fidelity, and the mysteriousness of her early death. Ione gathers the flowers, but my own hand wreathes them daily around the tomb. — She was worthy of a tomb in Athens!

You speak of the growing sect of the Christians in Rome. Sallust, to you I may confide my secret: I have pondered much over that faith — I have adopted it. After the destruction of Pompeii, I met once more with Olinthus — saved, alas! only for a day, and falling afterward a martyr to the indomitable energy of his zeal. In my preservation from the lion and the earthquake, he taught me to behold the hand of the unknown God! I listened — believed — adored! My own, my more than ever beloved Ione, has also embraced the creed! a creed, Sallust, which shedding light over this world, gathers its concentrated glory, like a sunset, over the next! We know that we are united in the soul, as in the flesh, for ever and for ever! Ages may roll on, our very dust be dissolved, the earth shrivelled like a scroll; but round and round the circle of eternity rolls the wheel of life — imperishable — unceasing! And as the earth from the sun, so immortality drinks happiness from virtue, *which is the smile upon the face of God!* Visit me, then, Sallust; bring with you the learned scrolls of Epicurus, Pythagoras, Diogenes; arm yourself for defeat; and let us, amid the groves of Academus, dispute under a surer guide than any granted to our fathers, on the mighty problem of the true ends of life and the nature of the soul.

Ione — at that name my heart yet beats ! — Ione is by my side as I write ; I lift my eyes, and meet her smile. The sunlight quivers over Hymettus, and along my garden I hear the hum of the summer bees. Am I happy, ask you ? Oh, what can Rome give me equal to what I possess at Athens ! Here, every thing awakens the soul and inspires the affections ; the trees, the waters, the hills, the skies, are those of Athens ! fair, though mourning ; mother of the poetry and the wisdom of the world. In my hall I see the marble faces of my ancestors. In the Ceramicus I survey their tombs ! In the streets I behold the hand of Phidias and the soul of Pericles. Harmodius, Aristogiton, *they* are every where ; but in our hearts, in *mine* at least, they shall not perish ! If any thing can make me forget that I am Athenian and not free, it is partly the soothing, the love, watchful, vivid, sleepless, of Ione ; a love that has taken a new sentiment in our new creed ; (b) a love which none of our poets, beautiful though they be, had shadowed forth in description ; for, mingled with religion, it partakes of religion ; it is blended with pure and unworldly thoughts ; it is that which we may hope to carry through eternity, and keep, therefore, white and unsullied, that we may not blush to confess it to our God ! This is the true type of the dark fable of our Grecian Eros and Psyche ; it is, in truth, the soul sleeping in the arms of love. And if this our love support me partly against the fever of the desire for freedom, my religion supports me more ; for whenever I would grasp the sword and sound the shell, and rush to a new Marathon, (but Marathon without victory,) I feel my despair at the chilling thought of my country's impotence, the crushing weight of the Roman yoke, comforted, at least, by the thought, that earth is but the beginning of life ; that the glory of a few years matters little in the vast space of eternity ; that there is no perfect freedom till the chains of clay fall from the soul, and all space, all time, become its heritage and domain. Yet, Sallust, some mixture of the soft Greek blood still mingles with my faith. I can share not the zeal of those who see crime and eternal wrath in men who cannot believe as they. I shudder not at the creed of others. I dare not *curse* them ; I pray the Great Father to *convert*. This lukewarmness exposes me to some suspicion among the Christians ; but I forgive it ; and not offending openly the prejudices of the crowd, I am thus enabled to protect my brethren from the danger of the law, and the consequences of their own zeal. If moderation seem to me the natural creature of benevolence, it gives, also, the greatest scope to beneficence.

Such, then, O Sallust ! is my life — such my opinions. In this manner I greet existence, and await death. And thou, glad-hearted and kindly pupil of Epicurus, thou — but, come hither, and see what enjoyments — what hopes are ours, — and not the splendour of imperial banquets — nor the shouts of the crowded circus, — nor the noisy forum, — nor the glittering theatre, — nor the luxuriant gardens, — nor the voluptuous baths of Rome, — shall seem to thee to constitute a life of more vivid and uninterrupted happiness than that which thou so unreasonably pitiest as the career of Glaucus the Athenian ! — Farewell !

* * * * *

(b) "A love that has taken a new sentiment in our new creed."

What we now term and feel to be *sentiment* in love was very little known among the ancients, and in this day is scarcely acknowledged out of Christendom. It is a feeling intimately connected with — not a belief, but a *conviction*, that the passion is of the soul, and, like the soul, immortal. Chateaubriand, in that work so full both of error and of truth, his essay on "The Genius of Christianity," has referred to this sentiment with his usual eloquence. It makes, indeed, the great distinction between the amatory poetry of the moderns and that of the ancients. And I have thought that I might, with some consonance to truth and nature, attribute the consciousness of this sentiment to Glaucus after his conversion to Christianity, though he is only able vaguely to guess at rather than thoroughly to explain, its cause.

Nearly seventeen centuries had rolled away, when the city of Pompeii was disinterred from its silent tomb,* all vivid with undimmed hues; its walls fresh as if painted yesterday, — not a hue faded on the rich mosaic of its floors, — in its forum the half-finished columns as left by the workman's hand, — before the trees in its gardens the sacrificial tripod, — in its halls the chest of treasure, — in its baths the strigil, — in its theatres the counter of admission, — in its saloons the furniture and the lamp, — in its triclinia the fragments of the last feast, — in its cubicula the perfumes and the rouge of fated beauty, — and everywhere the bones and skeletons of those (c) who once moved the springs of that minute yet gorgeous machine of luxury and of life!

In the house of Diomed, in the subterranean vaults, twenty skeletons (one of a babe) were discovered in one spot by the door, covered by a fine ashen dust that had evidently been wafted slowly through the apertures until it had filled the whole space. There were jewels and coins, candelabra for unavailing light, and wine hardened in the amphoræ — vain precautions for the prolongation of agonized life! The sand, consolidated by damps, had taken the forms of the skeletons as in a cast; and the traveller may yet see the impression of a female neck and bosom of young and round proportions — the trace of the fated Julia! It seems to the inquirer as if the air had been gradually changed into a sulphureous vapour, the inmates of the vaults had rushed to the door to find it closed and blocked by the scoria without, and in their attempts to force it, had been suffocated with the atmosphere.

In the garden was found a skeleton, with a key by its bony hand, and near it a bag of coins. This is believed to have been the master of the house — the unfortunate Diomed, who had probably sought to escape by the garden, and been destroyed either by the vapours or some fragment of stone. Beside some silver vases lay another skeleton, probably of a slave.

The houses of Sallust and of Pansa, the temple of Isis, with the juggling concealments behind the statues — the lurking place of its holy oracles, are now bared to the gaze of the curious. In one of the chambers of that temple was found a huge skeleton, with an axe beside it: two walls had been pierced by the axe — the victim could penetrate no farther. In the midst of the city was found another skeleton laden with coins, and many of the mystic ornaments of the fane of Isis. Death had fallen upon him in

* Destroyed A. D. 79 — first discovered, A. D. 1750.

(c) "And everywhere the bones and skeletons of those who once moved the springs of that minute yet gorgeous machine of luxury and of life!"

At present there have been about 350 or 400 skeletons discovered in Pompeii; but as a great part of the city is yet to be disinterred, we can scarcely calculate the number of those who perished in the destruction. Still, however, we have every reason to conclude that they were very few in proportion to those who escaped. The ashes had been evidently cleared away from many of the houses, no doubt for the purpose of recovering whatever treasures had been left behind. The mansion of our friend Sallust is one of those thus revisited. The skeletons which, reanimated for a while, the reader has seen play their brief parts upon the stage, under the names of Burbo, Calenus, Diomed Julia, and Arbaces, were found exactly as described in the text; may they have been reanimated more successfully for the pleasure of the reader than they have been for the solace of the author, who has vainly endeavoured, in the work which he now concludes, to beguile the most painful, gloomy, and despondent period of a life, in the web of which has been woven less of white than the world may deem. But, like most other friends, the imagination is capricious, and forsakes us often at the moment in which we most need its aid. As we grow older, we begin to learn that of the two our truer and more unfailing comforter is Custom. But I should apologize for this sudden and unseasonable indulgence of a momentary weakness — it is *but* for a moment! With returning health returns also the energy without which the soul were given us in vain, and which enables us calmly to face the evils of our being, and resolutely to fulfil its object. There is but one philosophy — though there are a thousand schools — and its name is Fortitude. —

"TO BEAR IS TO CONQUER OUR FATE!"

his avance, and Calenus perished simultaneously with Burbo ! As the excavators cleared on through the mass of ruin, they found the skeleton of a man literally severed in two by a prostrate column ; the skull was of so remarkable a conformation, so boldly marked in its intellectual, as well as its worse physical, developments, that it has excited the constant speculation of every itinerant believer in the theories of Spurzheim who has gazed upon that ruined palace of the mind. Still, after a lapse of eighteen centuries, the traveller may survey that airy hall, within whose cunning galleries and elaborate chambers once thought, reasoned, dreamed, and sinned the soul of Arbaces the Egyptian !

Viewing the various witnesses of a social system which has passed from the world for ever — a stranger, from that remote and barbarian isle which the imperial Roman shivered when he named, paused amid the delights of the soft Campania — and composed this History !

THE END OF THE LAST DAYS OF POMPEII.

OH! LET US NEVER MEET AGAIN!

BY MISS LOUISA H. SHERIDAN.

NAY, seek no more with soothing art
 (Since all our hours of love are vanished,)
 To cheer with hope this aching heart,
 From which all thought of joy is banished!
 Thou lov'st no more! too well I know,
 All hope to bring thee back is vain:
 And, as I'd hide, from all, my wo,
 Oh! let us never meet again!

I'll shun thee in the festive hall,
 Where joyous forms around are seen,
 Lest I might weep to think of all
 Those scenes where we've together been!
 I'll shun thee where the tide of song
 Comes o'er my ear with well-known strain:
 Thy tones would on my mem'ry throng—
 So let us never meet again!

No more my favourite bard I'll read,
 For *thou* hast marked each well-known page:
 'Tis cold forgetfulness I need;
 Nought else my sorrow could assuage.
 I cannot seek my pencil's aid,
 'T would sadly call forth mem'ry's train;
 With *thee* I've sketched each hill and glade,
 Where we shall never meet again!

And e'en my pen is faithless now;
 To seek new themes 't will not be taught:—
 It still would keep my early vow
 To write to *thee* my inmost thought.
 But I will ne'er address thee more!
 My proud and wounded heart 't would pain,
 If thou shouldst *now* my grief deplore.
 Oh! may we never meet again!

STARS OF SONG.

Brown and Shelley, comets of our sphere,
 Have swept their course erratic through the sky;
 Now to the Empyrean soaring high,
 Now down through darkest Chaos plunging sheer.
 Two other Lights of Song, whose lustre clear
 Was calm, — though quaint and coloured diversely, —
 Stern Crabbe and stately Scott, (names ne'er to die!)
 Have closed on our sad eyes their bright career.

Now sets a fifth — in whom the flame divine
 Burnt with a pure and high, though fitful beam :
 Enthusiast Coleridge ! favourite of the Nine !
 Hast thou too left us, like a twilight dream ?
 — Yes, gone — but in a higher sphere to shine,
 Where Heavenly Love shall be the endless theme !

THE UNWILLING BRIDE.

BY THOMAS HAYNES RAYLY, ESQ.

THE joy-bells are ringing — oh ! come to the church :
 We shall see the bride pass, if we stand in the porch.
 The bridegroom is wealthy : how brightly arrayed
 Are the menials who wait on the gay cavalcade,
 The steeds with the chariots prancing along,
 And the peasants advancing with music and song !

Now comes the procession ; the bridemaids are there,
 With white robes, and ribbons, and wreaths in their hair.
 Yon feeble old knight the bride's father must be,
 And now, walking proudly, her mother we see ;
 A pale girl in tears slowly moves by her side :
 But where is the bridegroom, and where is the bride ?

They kneel round the altar, — the organ has ceased,
 The hands of the lovers are joined by the priest ; —
 That bond ! — which death only can sever again !
 Which proves ever after life's blessing or bane !
 A bridal like *this* is a sorrowful sight :
 See ! the pale girl is bride to the feeble old knight.

Her hand on her husband's arm passively lies,
 And closely she draws her rich veil o'er her eyes.
 Her friends throng around her with accents of love :
 She speaks not — her pale lips inaudibly move.
 Her equipage waits, — she is placed by the side
 Of her aged companion — a sorrowing bride !

Again the bells ring, and the moment is come
 For the young heart's worst trial, the last look of home !
 They pass from the village — how eagerly still
 She turns and looks back from the brow of the hill !
 She sees the white cottage — the gardens she made —
 And she thinks of her lover, abandoned — betrayed !

But who, with arms folded, hath lingered so long
 To watch the procession, apart from the throng ?
 'Tis he ! the forsaken ! The false one is gone —
 He turns to his desolate dwelling alone ;
 But happier *there*, than the doom that awaits
 The bride who must smile on a being she hates !

